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AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY HELD AT PHILADELPHIA FOR PROMOTING USEFUL KNOWLEDGE

BY

PETER STEPHEN DU PONCEAU
Pres[illegible] of the Society

WITH THE
COMMUNICATION OF J. FRANCIS FISHER, Esq.
AND THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO WHICH
THESE PAPERS WERE REFERRED
READ OCTOBER 15, 1841

AND

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON THE
DATE OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIETY
ACCEPTED MAY 1, 1914

PHILADELPHIA
THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
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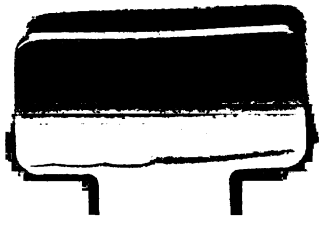

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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN

OF THE

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

It is generally known that the American Philosophical Society, as at present constituted, was formed at the latter end of the year 1768, by the union of two associations which existed at that time, one of which was called "The American Society held at Philadelphia for promoting and propagating useful knowledge," and the other "The American Philosophical Society"; but its history does not begin at that period: in order to have a full view of it, we ought to trace to their origin the two Societies by the union of which it was formed, follow them in their progress to the time of their junction, and what is not less interesting, we should be informed of their different views, their different interests, and the means by which their union was effected.

This is the more necessary, that although little more than seventy years have elapsed since that union took place, different opinions already prevail, as to the origin of one of the two Societies which, sacrificing their little jealousies to the honor of their country and the advantage of Science, agreed to unite their

efforts for the advancement of knowledge; and like a band of brothers to join in forming the Society which I have now the honor of addressing. Some are of opinion, that the "American" Society which I call thus for shortness' sake, and to distinguish it from the other which I shall call the "Philosophical," was no other than the celebrated *Junto,* established by the illustrious Franklin in 1727, and of which he gives so interesting an account in his autobiography, while others think that it was a different Association, of uncertain origin, but more recent than that of the other Society.

Among those who entertain the latter opinion, or rather who have doubts upon the subject, are men whose sentiments are entitled to the highest respect, men of profound learning and established reputation, justly deserved, to whom I should not have alluded, if one of them had not expressed his doubts in a work destined to go to posterity.[1]

It is not my intention to give to this sketch a polemical character, but in treating this subject historically, I shall be obliged to give the reasons which have produced in my mind the fullest convictions that the "American" Society was no other than the *Junto* established by Franklin, which, when it was united to the "Philosophical" Society, had only changed its name, extended its views, and increased the number of its members, without ceasing to be a continuation of the original association.

[1] 1 Sparks' "Franklin," 578.

The contrary opinion, or rather doubt, is of recent date. Ever since I had the honor to be a member of this Society,[1a] I felt a great interest in its history; I had frequent conversations with men who took a part in its formation, and particularly with the venerable Bishop White, whose loss we still deplore, and who was a member of the "American" Society. He loved to talk upon the subject. He informed me of many details respecting the union of the two Societies, which are not to be found in their records, some of which I have given in this sketch, that the memory of them may be preserved; but neither he, nor any body else at that time doubted of the "American" Society having been a continuation of the *Junto,* which, extending its views and desirous of enlarging its sphere of action, thought proper to modify its rules and to adopt a new name; this fact, until a very late period, was admitted by all.

To this traditional testimony we may add that of Franklin himself, to show that the Junto continued in existence until the time of its union with the "Philosophical" Society. While absent in Europe on public business, he never lost sight of his favorite *Club,* as he called it; in his letters to his friend Hugh Roberts, which Mr. Sparks has preserved for us, he never fails to mention it with affection, as will appear from the following extracts:

On the 16th of July 1753, he writes: "My respects to Mrs. Roberts, and all our old friends of the *Junto.*[2]

[1a] Mr. Du Ponceau was elected a member July 15, 1791.

[2] 7 Sparks' "Franklin," 77.

On the 16th of September 1758—"I do not quite like your absenting yourself from the good old Club, the *Junto*. I exhort you, therefore, to return to your duty."[3]

On the 26th February 1761—"You tell me you sometimes visit the ancient *Junto*. I wish you would do it oftener. Since we have held that Club till we have grown gray together, let us hold it out to the end."[4]

On the 7th of July, 1765—"I wish you would continue to meet the *Junto,* notwithstanding that some effects of our political misunderstandings may sometimes appear there. It is now, perhaps, one of the oldest Clubs, as I think it was formerly one of the *best,* in the King's dominions. It wants but about *two* years of *forty* since it was established."[5]

And lastly, 27th Feb. 1766—"Remember me affectionately to the *Junto*."[6]

It may be asked, perhaps, whether the Society which was joined to the "Philosophical," and then bore the name of the "American" Society, was really the old *Junto* mentioned in the above extracts. This objection can be easily answered. By the articles of union agreed upon between the two Societies, on the 20th of December 1768, it is stipulated

Art. 7: "That the *books* and all the curiosities, etc. of the former Societies, be deposited in the Cabinet

[3] Ibid., 182.
[4] Ibid., 223.
[5] Ibid., 301.
[6] Ibid., 308.

or elsewhere, as the United Society shall direct.'"[7] In consequence of this agreement, the Minutes of the two Societies were deposited in the Cabinet of the United Society, where they now are, and it appears from the Minutes of the American Society, that on the 2nd of September 1762, it was still called "The *Junto*."[8] The Minutes from 1762 to 1766 are missing. In 1766, the Society changed its name, but was still in fact the *Junto*.

There was no other Association in Philadelphia, that bore that name. In the year 1736 (as Franklin relates in his autobiography) the Junto wanted to increase the number of its members, which was limited to twelve. Franklin dissuaded them from it, by persuading them that it would be better for each member to form a limited Club, unconnected with them, but pursuing the same objects. Five or six of those Clubs, he says, were completed. They were called the *Vine*, the *Union*, the *Band*, etc., but none of them assumed the name of the *Junto*.[9] What became of them afterwards does not appear. It is probable that they had not a long existence.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the Society, which in 1766 assumed the name of the "American," was Franklin's old Junto of 1727, and no other. It is hardly credible that while the old Junto existed,

[7] See the minutes of the two societies.

[8] See the minutes.

[9] 1 Sparks' "Franklin," 129.

another Society should have adopted the same name; It would have been contrary to all the rules of delicacy and mutual respect.

Dr. Smith in his Eulogium of Franklin says that the Junto "became at last the foundation of the American Philosophical Society, *now assembled to pay the last tribute to his memory.*"[9a]

If there would still be any doubt upon this point, we have the testimony of Dr. William Smith, which is conclusive. Dr. Smith was a member of the "Philosophical" Society (not that which had before been the Junto) and was the Secretary at the time of the Union in the year 1768. He was very active in promoting the Union of the two associations, and must have known their respective origin. In 1792, he pronounced an Eulogium of Franklin before our Society, which was printed and is in our Library. In that Eulogium he says: "For the purpose of aiding and increasing the materials of information, one of the first Societies formed by Franklin was in the year 1728,[10] about the 22nd [year] of his age, and was

[9a] I do not know whether in my quotation I have added the part underlined. It ought to be inserted. Nor do I remember whether I have said that Smith, at the time of the Union, was Secretary to the Society *opposed to the Junto*. That is material. [Note added by Mr. Du Ponceau.]

[10] We are informed by Dr. Franklin, that the Junto was established in the autumn of 1727, but many writers date its establishment in the following year. Thus our Society is said to have begun in 1769, though the two Societies were united in December preceding.

called the *Junto*. It consisted of a select number of his younger friends, who met weekly, for the discussion of Questions in Morality, Politics, and Natural Philosophy. The number was limited to twelve members. After having existed *forty* years, and having contributed to the formation of some very great men, besides Franklin himself, this Society became at last, *the foundation* of the *American Philosophical Society* now assembled to pay the last tribute to his memory."

We shall see in the sequel that the Junto of 1727, and that of 1758 and 1766, of which alone the recorded proceedings have been preserved, were formed on the same model, pursued the same objects by the same means, and were governed by the same rules (as far as can be ascertained) and I am forced to conclude that the last was a continuation of the original Club, until it thought proper to change its name, with a view to the enlargement of its objects.

Having premised thus much, I shall now proceed historically. I shall draw my facts from the minutes of the two Societies that are deposited in our Archives, and from the information that I obtained from Cotemporaries. About twelve or fifteen years ago, I had formed the design, which I have since abandoned, of writing the History of this Society, at least to a certain period. With that view I made copious extracts from the Minutes above mentioned, which have aided me in preparing this humble sketch, which will, perhaps, facilitate the labours of our future historian.

I shall begin with the *Junto.*

The Records or Minutes of that institution during the first thirty years of its existence, are unfortunately lost. Those that we possess begin only with the 22nd of September 1758. This is not to be wondered at; it is more astonishing that so much should have been preserved. The Junto in its origin was an Association of young men for mutual improvement. It was, in fact, a *Club,* as Dr. Franklin properly called it. His spirit kept it alive, and raised it gradually to what it afterwards became. They had no common repository; they met at taverns, and their papers passed from hand to hand, and ultimately disappeared. This is no more than what might have been expected.

We are not in possession of their original rules, or Constitution. For all we know respecting it we are indebted to Dr. Franklin, who fortunately has supplied us in his autobiography with much information on this subject. To that and some other Documents found among his papers, we must, therefore, have recourse.

The great man informs us that in the autumn of 1727, he formed most of his ingenious acquaintances into a Club, for mutual improvement, which they called the *Junto.* They met on Friday evenings. The rules that *he drew up* required that every member in his turn, should produce one or more queries on any point of morals, politics, or natural philos-

ophy, to be discussed by the Company; and once in three months, produce and read an essay of his own, on any subject he pleased. Their debates were to be under the direction of a President, and to be conducted in the sincere spirit of enquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute or desire of victory; and to prevent warmth, all expressions of positiveness in opinions, or direct contradiction, were after sometime, made contraband, and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties.[11]

The number of the members was limited to twelve.[12]

The first members of the Society were himself, Joseph Breintnall, Thomas Godfrey, Nicholas Scull, Wm. Parsons, William Mangridge, Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, George Webb, Robert Grace, and William Coleman, who, with Franklin, were the only survivors at the time of the union of the two Societies.

This is all that is found in Franklin's autobiography respecting the Junto, except the character of its first members, which are too well known to need to be repeated here. But in some loose sheets found among his papers, and which have been preserved by Mr. Sparks, some further light is thrown upon the subject.

Among those scraps (if anything from Franklin may be so called) we find a paper entitled: "Rules for a Club established for mutual improvement,"

[11] 1 Sparks' "Franklin," 81.

[12] Ibid., 129.

which Mr. Sparks tells us in a note was drawn up for the Junto in 1728.[13] In that paper are forty questions to be asked of each member at every meeting. I do not think that they were adopted, or, if they were, they cannot have remained long in use, as it would have taken up the whole time of each meeting for each member to answer them, and they would have led to conversations and perhaps, discussions without end. They related chiefly to the gossip of the day, what strangers had arrived in town, who had failed in business, etc., which questions appear to have been intended more for the worldly advantage than for the mental improvement of the members.

Franklin candidly admits that the Junto was partly established with a view to promote the success of the members in business, and that he himself profited by it.[14]

But that was not their principal object. In the same papers there are four questions, distinct from the forty above mentioned, which are of a very different character, and which truly bear the stamp of the great mind of Franklin. I copy literally from the paper as Mr. Sparks has recorded it.

"Any person to be qualified (as a member of the *Junto*) to stand up, and lay his hand upon his breast, and be asked these questions, viz:

"1. Have you any particular disrespect to any present members? *Answer.* I have not.

[13] 2 Sparks' "Franklin," 9. [14] 1 Sparks' "Franklin," 83.

"2. Do you sincerely declare that you love mankind in general, of what profession or religion soever? *Answer.* I do.

"3. Do you think any person ought to be harmed in his body, name or goods, for mere speculative opinions, or his external way of worship? *Answer.* No.

"4. Do you love truth for truth's sake, and will you endeavor impartially to find and receive it yourself, and communicate it to others? *Answer.* Yes."

It is very probable that this admirable *test* was adopted by the Junto at its first establishment, and made a part of its rules. In another part of the same volume,[15] there is another paper of Dr. Franklin, entitled: "Proposals and queries for the consideration of the Junto," and dated June 30th, 1732, between four and five years after it was established. It does not appear whether those proposals were adopted; but one of them is: "That all new members be qualified by the *four qualifications,* and all the old ones take . . . (the sentence is not finished). This seems to imply that the *four qualifications,* which can be no others than those above cited, were already in use among the Junto, and we shall see hereafter that they were made part of the amended rules in 1766, and afterwards, until the entirely new organization of the Junto in 1768, which produced the union.

This is all the information which the works of Franklin supply us with on the subject of the *Junto.*

[15] P. 551.

We may, however, gather something more from what we possess of the records or minutes of their proceedings, from 1758 to 1768 inclusive, a period of eleven years, in which unfortunately there is a chasm of four years, from 1762 to 1766, by the loss, as is believed, of a volume of those minutes, which there is little hope of recovering.

I shall then by the aid of those manuscripts, follow the Junto through their various labours, to the period when the "Philosophical" Society which had been asleep during more than twenty years, began to revive, when, after a short history of that institution, I shall follow the two Societies in their mutual jealousies, and in their negotiations for an union, which were happily terminated by the formation of the *American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia, for promoting useful Knowledge.*

The minutes of the Junto, afterward called the "American" Society, that are now in our possession, consist of two folio manuscript volumes, which, by the care of our active and zealous Librarian,[15a] have been handsomely bound up in one. One of these manuscripts contains the proceedings of the *Junto,* so-called, from the 22nd of September 1758 to the 24th of the same month in 1762, being a period of four years. The other consists of the minutes of the same body, first under its original name and afterwards under that of the "American Society, held

[15a] John Vaughan.

at Philadelphia, for promoting and propagating useful knowledge." These minutes begin on the 25th of April 1766 and end with the union of the two Societies, on the 20th of December 1768, comprising a period within a few days of two years and nine months.

I am strongly inclined to believe that there was an intermediate volume, comprising the four years between 1762 and 1766, which has, unfortunately, been lost. Dr. Smith, in his above cited Eulogium on Franklin, tells us "that a book containing *many* of the questions discussed by the *Junto,* was, on the formation of the American Philosophical Society, put into his hands for the purpose of being digested, and in due time published among the transactions of that body." It was one of the stipulations at the time of the union, that selections should be made from the papers of the two Societies, should be published in the transactions of the United Society, and that was in fact done, as may be seen in the first Volume of our Transactions.

The date of that book only remains to be ascertained. Fortunately Dr. Smith in his oration mentions several of the questions which that volume contained, and one of them fixes its date. The question is: "How may the possession of the Lakes be improved to our advantage?" Now this question can only have been asked after the cession of Canada in 1763, and not long after it, as the subject was then

fresh, and attracted the general attention. I think then I am founded in my conjecture that such a book existed, and that it was the one that was put into the hands of Dr. Smith, which he forgot to return, or if he returned it, was otherwise lost.

This conjecture acquires strength when we consider what little care was taken of those valuable documents. By the articles of union, on the 20th of December 1768, it was agreed that the books etc. of the two Societies should be placed at the disposal of the United Society. But this stipulation was not faithfully executed. I do not know how the first of the two volumes above mentioned came into our possession, but the second and most important, as it contains the proceedings of the new organization of the Junto and the negotiations for the union of the two Societies, remained eleven years after that union in the hands of Mr. Robert Strettell Jones, a member of the Society, who, on the 26th of June, 1781, sent it to one of the Secretaries, with other documents belonging to us, and with the only apology that he had "found them among his papers." See his letter to Mr. [Timothy] Matlack, bound with the two volumes of the proceedings of the Junto.

I proceed now to examine the contents of those volumes:

In the first we recognize in every page the old Junto, as established by Dr. Franklin. The minutes that it contains are filled with questions to be dis-

cussed, discussions thereon, and with the decisions given upon them and essays written by the members and read at the meetings. It is useless to enter into details upon this subject, the proceedings will speak for themselves. I shall only take notice of what appears the most worthy of remark.

At the date when the volume begins, the members were: Francis Rawle, Charles Thomson, J. Woolley, Peter Chevalier, William Franklin, (son of Benjamin, and afterwards Governor of New Jersey), J. Mather, Philip Syng, J. Paschall, Edmund Physick, J. Howell, and W. Hopkins—(eleven members). Those absent are noted. Thirty years had elapsed since the formation of the Club, and therefore it is not astonishing that there should be a total change of its members. William Coleman, one of the founders, was still alive, [but] many causes might prevent him from continuing his attendance.

Nor do we find among these names those of Benjamin Franklin and of his friend Hugh Roberts. The former was in England, and it was unknown when he should return. He was probably more considered at that time as the founder and patron of that Club (for such, in fact, it was) than as one of its active members.

The membership of a Club for mutual improvement is not like that of a Society for the promotion of knowledge; it does not look forward to perpetuity, and it is not considered an honor to be on the list of

its members. It would, probably, have been dissolved, like so many others, if Franklin had not exerted himself by his presence while here, and by his correspondence when abroad, to keep it alive. As his representative, as it were, we find his son William Franklin in this list of members, though he does not appear to have been a very constant attendant. He went often into the country, probably to New Jersey, of which he was appointed Governor about the time when this volume ends.

As to Hugh Roberts, he does not seem to have shared in the enthusiasm of his illustrious friend. He was advanced in years and did not probably like to associate with a younger race. He considered himself as *emeritus*. In 1768, when the differences were at their height between the two Societies, we find him enlisted with that opposed to the old Junto.[16]

In a Club like that we are speaking of, which lasted during forty years, limited to twelve members, and originally formed by young men for their mutual improvement, we must not expect to find constantly the same names; as the old ones retire, younger ones take their places, but the Club still remains, notwithstanding these successive mutations, the same as originally formed.

Thus the Junto will be found to have been until a short time before its union under another name

[16] He was elected a member of the Philosophical Society, on the 19th of January, 1768.

with the Philosophical Society. The loss of the missing volume is so much the more to be regretted, as it included a period when Franklin was in this country, and probably took an active part in the Junto proceedings. During the two other periods he was in England.

At the time we are speaking of and afterward, until the union of the two Societies, Charles Thomson, in the absence of Franklin, appears to have been the leader of the Junto. I need not say that he was the same man who at the Revolution, and until the establishment of the present Federal Constitution, held the high and important office of Secretary to the Congress of the United States.

The meetings of the Junto, with few interruptions, regularly took place on the Friday of every week, and business was transacted in the usual manner, until the latter end of the year 1760, when their number was reduced to six, who were Charles Thomson, Edmund Physick, Francis Rawle, Joshua Howell, Isaac Paschal, and William Hopkins. Two, one of whom was William Franklin, had gone to England, two had died, the others did not attend, nor contribute to the expenses, and were considered at most as honorary members.

In that situation of things, the attending members were at a loss what to do; several meetings took place, but no business was done; at last on the 6th of February, 1761, the state of the Junto was taken

into consideration; it was proposed to dissolve the Association, but that was objected to; it was thought best to go on and to return to the first principles, which, it would appear had been in some respects lost sight of; but the original rules (drafted by Franklin) had been lost or mislaid, and could not be found. After much discussion, it was determined to appoint a Committee to write them anew from the recollection of the members; Edmund Physick and Charles Thomson were appointed that Committee, who it seems, had the matter long under their consideration, for they did not make their report until the 30th of July following. The Rules which they reported, with some amendments to make them more conformable to the original Rules, were then adopted and ordered to be entered on the Minutes, which was done.[17]

These Rules are entitled "Rules of a Society meeting weekly in the City of Philadelphia, for their mutual improvement in useful knowledge." They do not appear to differ materially from those established by Franklin, as far as he has made them known to us; the object and the exercises are the same; they appear to have been conscientiously drawn up from the recollection of the members. The four famous qualifications are not forgotten. They are made a part of the Rules, nearly in the same words as they were draughted by Franklin, and as they are given above, p. 12, et seq.

[17] Minutes, pp. 80–83.

The number of the members does not appear to be limited. Perhaps it was a thing understood, and not made a part of the Rules.

The rules might be amended with the consent of three-fourths of a Company, after a week's previous notice.

They are very particular for preserving decency in the discussions between the members.

As to their internal organization they had a Chairman and Secretary elected for four weeks and a Treasurer for six months. The Society in these Rules is called the *Junto*. They are signed by Edmund Physick, Isaac Paschall, Charles Thomson, William Hopkins, Joshua Howell, and George Roberts, who seems to have succeeded Francis Rawle.

After this awakening, the Junto seems to have gone on tolerably well, though still few in number, until the 16th of October, when the Minutes suddenly stop, and are not resumed until the 3rd of September 1762, on which day we find the following entry:

"The members of the Junto, desirous of continuing the Society, met this evening, having agreed with Mr. Carothers (the inn keeper) for the room on the same terms on which we had it formerly. Mr. George Roberts having been formerly approved, was now introduced and *qualified,* as a member. E. Physick became Chairman this evening and Charles Thomson, Secretary. Charles Thomson proposed Nathaniel Evans to be a member of the Society."

A question to be discussed was proposed.

Afterwards a few meetings were held, thinly attended, until the 22nd of October, when three members only, Hopkins, Paschal, and Thomson, were present. Physick and Roberts are noted as absent, so that the Society was reduced to five members. The only entry on the minutes of that days is "Conversation general." And here ends the first Volume.

The Junto never was (at least that we know of) so near its dissolution as at that time. But fate had decided it otherwise. Less than two months had elapsed when Franklin arrived at Philadelphia from England, where he had resided five years.[18] He would not have suffered his favorite Junto, the bantling of his youth and the Child of his affection to be dissolved, and if it had ceased to exist, he would not three and four years afterward[19] have urged so warmly his friend Hugh Roberts to attend its meetings.

This strengthens my conjectures that there existed a book of minutes including the two years when its founder was in this City. How interesting it would be to read what passed at those meetings when Franklin was present. But, perhaps the book is not lost. It may yet be found in the hands of the descendants of Dr. Smith, or of some other person. It is, at least, worth the enquiry.

[18] He arrived the 1st of November, 1762. 1 Sparks' "Franklin," 269.

[19] In 1765 and 1766. See above, p. 6.

I shall now pass on to the second, which ought to be the third, and is the last volume, as it ends with the Union of the two Societies.

I am now proceeding to the most interesting part of this communication. Though a period of less than three years is yet before me, it is replete with matter of the highest interest. The humble Junto by its association with another body, which a quarter of a century before had tried the same experiment and failed, is going to form a Society for the purpose of promoting, extending, and disseminating knowledge, and America, Colonial America, not yet freed from her subjection to the power of Great Britain, is going to take her place in the great Republic of Literature and Science. We must follow her in this progress.

There can be no doubt that Dr. Franklin, during his stay in this city, did everything in his power to revive and excite the zeal of his favorite Junto, and it appears that he succeeded to a degree that he did not expect or even foresee; for in his letters down to the year 1766, he speaks only of the old Junto, and invites his friends to attend more regularly to its meetings, but at the time when he thus wrote the Junto were meditating on the means of extending their sphere of action, and their usefulness from themselves to the world at large.

Near forty years had elapsed since their first establishment in 1727; the country, in the meantime, had

increased in population and wealth, and the inhabitants had made considerable progress in knowledge. This change of circumstances could not but strike the minds of the leaders of the Junto, particularly of Charles Thomson, who possessed a liberal and enlarged mind, and whom we find at this time acting as the worthy successor of Franklin. He was a good classical scholar, and possessed much general knowledge. He saw that the time was come for establishing a learned Society at Philadelphia, and that the Junto might be its basis. We are going to see how he labored for that purpose, and how, in the end, he succeeded.

The minutes of the Junto, contained in the second of the two volumes in our possession, begin with the 25th of April 1766. The members at that time were nine in number, to wit: Edmund Physick, Isaac Bartram, Isaac Paschall, Moses Bartram, James Pearson, Isaac Lane, Joseph Paschall, Owen Biddle, and Charles Thomson. Only three of these were members at the breaking up four years before, but among these were Charles Thomson and Edmund Physick, who appear to have been the most active and most efficient in former times. The others had come in by successive elections.

At the first opening of these minutes, it appears that they are the continuation of former proceedings of the *old* Junto.

Little was done at the meetings, until the 23rd of

May, when it appears that Owen Biddle and Isaac Paschall had been appointed a Committee to revise the Laws and make *a few alterations* in them.

On this day they made their report, and produced the Laws as altered by them; it was agreed that they should be taken into consideration at the next meeting, which was on the 30th, when those Laws with a few further alterations were adopted, and ordered to be fairly copied in the Book of the Minutes.

They were in fact fairly copied on some pages, which, it seems, were left blank for that purpose at the beginning of the Book. They do not differ substantially from those adopted in 1761, said to be the original Rules drafted by Franklin re-written from the recollection of the members. They are entitled "Rules of a Society meeting weekly in the City of Philadelphia, for their mutual improvement in useful knowledge." The objects of the Association, its exercises, its internal organization are the same as in the Rules proposed to be amended. Even the four qualifications are not forgotten, but are inserted at full length; the only thing that is remarkable, is the new name which the Junto assumed,—"The American Society for promoting and propagating useful knowledge held in Philadelphia," which appears to have been filled up after the rules had been copied in the Minute Book as above mentioned and apparently in a different hand, and that name was not agreed upon until the 13th of December, more than six

months after the adoption of the amended rules. On that day they adopted additional rules for the admission of *Corresponding* Members, defining their duties and privileges. They also heard a paper read on the mutual attraction of various substances, with a number of experiments. The name of the author is struck off.[20]

It is remarkable that there does not appear to have been any discussion as to the substitution of this new name to that of the Junto. The thing was probably settled in private conversations between the members.

It is impossible not to be struck with the great difference that there is between the *title* of this Society as expressed in the heading of the rules and the new *name* now given to it. The one contemplates an association of students, as it were, for their mutual improvement and the rules to which it is prefixed correspond with that title, the other aims at much greater objects, "the promotion," and if that were not enough, the "propagation" of knowledge. Here, then, is a *learned* Society at once formed; the design is manifest, the foundation is laid and a suitable superstructure only is wanting. The Committee who reported the rules did not dare to wander out of the road traced by Franklin; but there was a man of genius, Charles Thomson, whose views extended further, who did not communicate them at once, in all their extent, but gradually led his associates into the

[20] Minutes, 2d part, 29, 31.

path of which his clear mind perceived the honorable end.

This memorable innovation took place in December 1766. The next step was to extend the list of the associates. We see the names of thirty members subscribed to the amended Rules, several of whom, but we do not know how many, came in during the following year. In the proceedings of that year we see much talk about *enlarging* the Society, that is to say extending its views and its objects; but nothing effectual was done until the year 1768, when things were brought to a conclusion, which was, I believe, very little expected, at least by those who were not in the secret.

It is to be presumed, however, that the subject was talked of abroad, and that the views of the old Junto engaged the public attention. The formation of a learned Society in the City of Philadelphia could not fail to be a subject of great interest. We shall now see the consequences that it produced.

Dr. Franklin, as is well known, was much engaged in the year 1743 in various projects, all tending to the honor and advantage of his country. In some of these he failed, because his mind was elevated above the age that he lived in, in others he succeeded; but all produced good fruits in due time. Thus he tells us in his autobiography, that he failed at that time in procuring a College to be established at Phila-

delphia, for the education of youth, a project which, however, was carried afterwards into full execution and became the foundation of our University, but that he was more successful in the year following, in proposing and *establishing* a "Philosophical Society."[21] His success at that time was only temporary, but the tree that he planted, after languishing for more than a quarter of a century and being apparently dead, suddenly revived and, by its union with the old Junto, became one of the columns of our edifice.

The first thing that Franklin did to effect that noble purpose, was to issue a "Proposal for promoting useful knowledge among the British plantations in America." It was in the form of a circular letter, which the author put to his different correspondents. In that letter, after noticing the vast extent of the country, its various productions, and the improvements, manufactures, etc., of which it was susceptible, he observes "that the first drudgery of settling new colonies was then pretty well over, and there were many in every province, in circumstances that set them at ease, and afforded them license to cultivate the finer arts, and improve the common stock of knowledge. To such of those as were men of speculation, he addressed his plan which was: "That one Society should be formed of *virtuosi* or ingenious men, residing in the several colonies, to be established in the City of Philadelphia, as the most central place,

[21] 1 Sparks' "Franklin," 144.

and to be called "*The American Philosophical Society.*" He offered to be its Secretary until, he modestly said, a better one could be provided.

The members of that Society were to correspond with each other, with the Royal Society of London, and that of Dublin. No mention is made of a foreign Correspondence.

There should always be at Philadelphia at least seven members, viz: a Physician, a Botanist, a Mathematician, a Chemist, a Mechanician, a Geographer, and a general Natural Philosopher, besides a President, Treasurer, and Secretary.[22]

It is evident that the Junto at that time could not furnish these requisites; therefore it could not be made the basis of the proposed Association, besides he wanted the aid of the men of wealth and influence, which that little obscure band could not have procured.

Franklin had probably in his eye when he wrote those proposals the seven Philadelphia Members that he speaks of, as well as the President, Treasurer, and Secretary. He found, I presume, no difficulty in collecting them and in obtaining their co-operation. They had several meetings, but of what they did, we have no information except from a letter of Franklin to his friend Cadwallader Colden, which is in these words:

[22] 6 Sparks' "Franklin," 14.

"NEW YORK,
April 5th, 1744.

Sir:—Happening to be in this City about some particular affairs, I have the pleasure of receiving yours of the 28th past here, and can now acquaint you that the Society, as far as it relates to Philadelphia, is actually formed, and has had several meetings to mutual satisfaction. As soon as I get home, I shall send you an account of what has been done, and proposed at these meetings.

The members are:

Dr. Thomas Bond, as Physician
Mr. John Bartram, as Botanist
Mr. Thomas Godfrey, as Mathematician
Mr. Samuel Rhoads, as Mechanician
Mr. William Parsons, as Geographer
Mr. Phineas Bond, as General Natural Philosopher
Mr. Thomas Hopkinson, President[23]
Mr. William Coleman, Treasurer
B. F——, Secretary.

To whom the following members have since been added, viz: Mr. Alexander, of New York, Mr. Morris, Chief Justice of the Jerseys, Mr. Home, Secretary of D°., Mr. John Coxe, of Trenton, and Mr. Martyn, of the same place.

Mr. Nichols tell me of several other gentlemen of

[23] Thomas Hopkinson was the grandfather of our worthy Vice-President [Joseph Hopkinson] of the same name.

this City that incline to encourage the thing, and there are a number of others, in Virginia, Maryland, and the New England Colonies who are expected to join us, as soon as they are acquainted that the Society has begun to form itself.

I am, Sir, with much respect,

Your most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN."

The hopes of Dr. Franklin were not fulfilled. It is probable that he was not seconded. No records of that Society, if they had any, have been preserved prior to 1768. In the list of their members, which they gave to the American Society in December of that year, under the head of "Old Members under the Original Plan begun 1743," we find only the names of B. Franklin, William Coleman, John Bartram, Thomas Bond, Phineas Bond, Samuel Rhoads and Francis Alison, seven in all; and all, except the last, who was the Vice-Provost of the College, part of the nine mentioned in Franklin's letter above cited. Among the corresponding members, there is only the name of Cadwallader Colden, elected in 1743, all the rest in 1768.

Three new resident members, however, the two Doctors Shippen and Mr. John Lukens, appear to have been elected in November, 1767; another, Dr. Cadwalader Evans, was also elected, but declined.

This is all we know of the "Philosophical Society" prior to 1767. Let us now return to that year.

The Province of Pennsylvania was then divided into two great parties. The one was the party of the Proprietaries, who were struggling to preserve their federal sovereignty, which they were in danger of losing. They had governed with too high a hand, and the King had been petitioned to make Pennsylvania a Royal Government. The other was the popular party, opposed to their Government and to this the greatest number if not all the members of the Junto, now called the "American Society" belonged. To the Proprietary's party belonged the wealthiest and most influential men, such as the Allens, the Shippens, the Francises and all that were considered as the aristocracy of the country. The officers of the Government, of course, belonged to it. At the head of this party was James Hamilton, who had been twice Governor of the Province and was the President of the Provincial Council. The leader of the opposite party was Benjamin Franklin, who was then in England, but had great influence in the Province, whose agent he was at the British Court.

These parties had been much exasperated against each other; but the encroachments of the British Parliament on the liberties of the country, had in a degree softened those asperities and brought the citizens nearer to each other for the purpose of legal resistance. Yet the flame of party rancour was not extinguished, particularly in the highest ranks of Society.

In that state of things, the high aristocratic party could not see with unconcern that an obscure Club, which till then had been unknown, should assume to form themselves into a learned Society like those which in Europe bore Royal titles and were under the patronage of the King, the fountain of all honors, and that they should be so independently of the Government which represented the King in the Province. It was carrying the spirit of liberty too far, and they determined to counteract it, as they had not the power directly to forbid it. For that purpose, they could think of nothing better than restoring to life the Society which had been established in 1743, with the participation of the men in power, and they took immediate steps to effect it.

The few members that remained of that abortive Association, were easily collected, and their design was made known, but whether they thought that would be sufficient to check their antagonists, or from some other cause, they did nothing until the month of November 1767, when they added to their list three new members, and offered membership to a fourth, who refused it.

The American Society, on their part, took no decisive measure during that year, but went on in their usual way; they talked of *enlarging* their Society, as they expressed it, but did nothing to effect that purpose, except electing a few members. The two parties seemed to lie on their oars, watching each

other's motions; it was not until the year 1768 that the contest truly began and assumed a formidable aspect.

On the first day of January in that year, the newly formed, or rather newly named "American Society," consisted of thirteen members, who are named in the heading of that day's minutes, as follows:

Present	*Absent.*
Charles Thomson	Edmund Physick
Owen Biddle	William Biddle
Clement Biddle	John Lukens
James Pearson	Samuel Eldridge
Dr. John Morgan	Nicholas Waln
Joseph Paschall	Isaac Paschall
Benjamin Davis	

"This evening" (say the minutes) the subject of *enlarging* the Society was again resumed, and Charles Thomson informed the *Company*,[24] that he had (as far as he was able) collected the sense of the *Company* on the subject under consideration, and committed his thoughts to writing as they had occurred to himself, and on considering the matter, he was desired to read them."

Mr. Thomson then produced and read a paper entitled: "Proposals for enlarging this Society, in order that it may the better answer the end for

[24] The Junto always called themselves the *Company*, the members now sometimes forgot that they had become a *Society*.

which it was instituted, namely the promoting and propagating useful knowledge."

In this very able paper, though the author may not appear to be profoundly learned in Natural History or Philosophy, he shows himself, at least, a warm patriot, and a zealous promoter of science for the honor as well as for the advantage of his country. He expatiates at great length on the vast extent, the various climates, and the numerous productions of the British American Continent, how all these might be improved for the common benefit and points to Science as the means of producing that improvement. But the Society should not confine itself to benefiting our citizens; it should aim at enlightening the world, and acquire fame abroad by its scientific discoveries, of which Franklin had given the example. He, therefore, concludes with proposing "to enlarge the plan of the Society, to call to their assistance men of learning and ingènuity from every quarter, and unite in one generous noble attempt, not only to promote the interest of our Country, but to raise her to eminence in the rank of polite and learned Nations."[25]

Why, said he, should we hesitate?

"This proposal" say the minutes, "being read and approved, C. Thomson was desired to draw up some

[25] The preface to the first volume of our Transactions [published in 1771] is almost entirely taken from that paper and was probably written by Charles Thomson.

rules for enlarging our Society, and carrying his plan into execution."

This was flying in the face of the newly revived "Philosophical Society." It awakened them from their slumber, and they set to work in earnest. On the 19th of the same month, they associated to themselves seventeen new members, among whom were John Penn, the Governor and one of the Proprietaries, James Hamilton, the President of the Council, John Dickinson, David Rittenhouse, Hugh Roberts, Israel Pemberton, Joseph Galloway, Thomas Willing, Benjamin Chew, and several other eminent men; at their next meeting, on the 26th, they began to frame their rules (for the word "Constitution" was not at that time so generally applied to such associations as it is at present) and that they did by discussing successively their most important principles, which they continued until the 8th of March, when the rules were finally adopted.

The American Society were startled at these proceedings. They saw they had to do with powerful adversaries and made proposals for an union of the two Societies, of which the particulars have not come down to us, but it appears that they were based on the principles of perfect equality.

This was not, however, exactly what the Philosophical Society wanted, as will appear from the sequel. At their meeting of the 2nd of February, the following paper was read: "A Society having subsisted

for sometime in this city, under the name of "The American Society held at Philadelphia for promoting and propagating useful knowledge," whose views have been nearly the same with those which are published in the American Philosophical Society, and it being judged by [this Society] that the ends proposed by both could be carried on with more advantage to the public, if a union could take place between them, it is proposed that such a union may take place."

To this paper was added a list of the members of the American Society to the number of seventeen resident and four corresponding members, to which the American Society had been increased in the intermediate time.

If the American were afraid of the Philosophical Society, the latter could not but perceive that an union was desirable, as two such learned Societies could not exist in Philadelphia at that time by the side of each other, but they were desirous of acting the principal part in that union, and obtaining a kind of preponderance or superiority over their opponents, by appearing to have admitted them into their bosom; their numbers were about equal and, so far, there was equality between them, but the others wanted an union, not an admission. The Philosophical Society, however, wishing to take that advantage over them, immediately resolved to break through their rule already adopted, which required that new members should be proposed at the meeting preceding that of

their election, immediately elected the members of the American Society by their names, and sent them notice of their election. But the late Junto, now the American Society, were not sensible of the honor intended them, and declined it, alleging that "those were not the terms which they had proposed."

This answer was received on the 9th of February, and though the rules of the Philosophical Society were not yet complete, and were not till the 8th of March, they immediately proceeded to decide the question "How many officers their Society should consist of," and it was determined that there should be one President, two Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, and three Secretaries to be chosen annually, and those chosen that night to continue till the first of January following and the ballots being taken, the following officers were chosen:

President, James Hamilton.

Vice-Presidents, Wm. Shippen and Thomas Bond.

Treasurer, Philip Syng.

Secretaries, Rev. William Smith, Rev. John Ewing, and Dr. Thomas Moore.

This gave great offense to the American Society. We find in their minutes, that on the 12th of the same month (February) it was unanimously agreed that a Committee should be appointed "to draw up a short plain history of the origin of the Society, and of what had passed between them and the Philosophical, and to lay it before the Company at some further meet-

ing."[26] Charles Thomson, Isaac Paschall, Dr. [John] Morgan, and Dr. [Cadwalader] Evans were immediately appointed, but it does not appear that they performed the duty.

At the following meeting (the 19th) Benjamin Franklin was in the regular form, by ballot, and having been proposed at a former meeting, unanimously elected a member of the Society. This was probably done *ex majore cautelâ,* his son, Governor Franklin having been admitted without an election, at the preceding meeting, on merely signing the amended rules, on the ground that he had been a member of the *ancient Society* (the Junto), which rule of admission, they said, was concluded on in *reviving* the Society.[27] But Franklin was in England and could not sign the amended articles, it was thought best to elect him. The Society probably contemplated to make him their President, and wished to avoid all disputes, particularly if an union should take place, which might not have been quite despaired of.

Until that time the Philosophical Society had held their meetings in public houses, but the Governor, who as their Patron was present at this meeting, gave them permission to hold them at the State House; thus they were supported with the favor and weight of the Government.

[26] Minutes A. S., 2d part, p. 82.

[27] Ibid.

The American Society did not proceed so fast. They did nothing for six months, but elect new members, among whom was Dr. Benjamin Rush, and order Thomson's proposals to be printed in the Pennsylvania Chronicle. They postponed from time to time the consideration of their new rules, which were not agreed upon, until the 23rd of September, as will be shown in its place.

I do not find, on examining their minutes, that during the summer and autumn of 1768, the American Society did anything worthy of remark that may properly be called Philosophical; while on the contrary, the Philosophical Society, (to their honor be it spoken) was actively engaged in objects well worthy of the name they had assumed.

The transit of the planet Venus over the disk of the Sun, was expected to happen on the 3rd of June in the following year. The Society employed itself in preparatory measures for making astronomical observations upon that phenomenon in due time.

One of their members, Mr. James Dickinson, made a proposal to the Society for observing the transit at James' Bay (part of Hudson's Bay) and for reconnoitring and making a map of the Country from the South end of Hudson's Bay, extending towards the head of the Mississippi. He offered at the same time to undertake in person the conducting of the observation of the transit and making the other necessary observations on the country. The

consideration of this offer, as to its possibility, usefulness, and probable expense, was referred to the Committee on Natural Philosophy and Astronomy, but we do not know what was the result. It is probable that the expense was found too great.

The Society, however, at that time, had already appointed two observations to be made, but instruments were wanted, and they had no funds. They, therefore, applied to the Legislature for aid and that body, very liberally, by their resolution of the 15th of October, granted a sum not exceeding £100 sterling, for the purchase of a reflecting telescope and a micrometer, which, after being used by the Society were to remain the property of the Assembly.[28]

This Society, it must be owned, enjoyed the patronage of the Government, of which the other was deprived.

Various observations on the transit of Venus, were made after the union of the two Societies, which were published in the first volume of our Transactions, and attracted the attention of the learned in Europe.

I must give credit, however, to the American Society for a liberal act, which evinces their generous spirit and their zeal for the improvement of their Country. It shows also the progress that had been made at that time in the culture of our native vine.

On the 25th of November, while the negotiations

[28] Votes, Vol. 6, p. 111.

were pending, two specimens of wine were brought to them, one a year old, the other of the then present vintage, made by one Maurice Pound, of Red Lion Hundred, in the County of New Castle, out of grapes gathered from vines which he himself had planted.[29] By a certificate which he produced, it appeared that in the course of four or five years, he had cleared twelve acres of land, and planted therein 18000 vines, that upwards of 8000 of them were then growing, and about 2050 in a flourishing state. In the year 1767, about 2½ years from his first planting the slips, he pressed out about 150 gallons of wine, and in the then present year expected to make a larger quantity.

The Society awarded him a premium of ten pounds, which was immediately paid to him by their Treasurer.

We must now return to the unfortunate dissentions between the two Societies, and hasten to their happy termination.

I have shown the exasperation of the American Society in the month of February, when they refused the offer of the Philosophical Society to admit them as individuals into their body, and ordered an historical narrative of their differences to be written, yet for more than six months they postponed from time [to time], the consideration of the new Rules which a Committee had been ordered to prepare, it

[29] It does not appear that they were foreign plants, which a Delaware farmer could hardly have imported at that time.

was not until the 23rd of September that those rules were adopted. It is unnecessary to enter here into many details, it is sufficient to say, that those rules were no longer those of a Club for mutual improvement, but that they were well adapted to the object for which they were designed. The internal organization of this Society, consisted of a President, Vice-President, two Secretaries, three Curators of Natural History, one for each Kingdom, and a Treasurer, all to be annually elected.

On the 4th of November, they elected the following officers:

President, Benjamin Franklin
Vice-President, Samuel Powel
Secretaries, Charles Thomson, Thomas Mifflin
Curators, Dr. John Morgan, Lewis Nicola, and Isaac Bartram
Treasurer, Clement Biddle.

On the same day, they incorporated the Philadelphia Medical Society into their body.

While these things were passing, it is probable that negotiations were privately going on between the patriotic members of the two Societies for effecting the desired union, for in the minutes of the Philosophical Society, under the date of the 15th of the same month, we find the following entry:

"This Society having been informed that there is a disposition in the members of the American Society for promoting useful knowledge to unite with us, and

that they would appoint a Committee to treat with a Committeee of this Society upon the subject, and we, being desirous to promote such a union, do appoint Dr. Shippen, Dr. Bond, Mr. Syng, Mr. Rhoads, Dr. Smith and Mr. Ewing to be a Committee to concert measures and prepare the way for such union, and to make report of their proceedings at the next meeting."

On the 18th, the Secretary of the American Society, made known the above to that body, who considering that the views of both Societies were the same, and being persuaded that the ends proposed by both might be better answered and with more advantage to the public if a union should take place, appointed their Vice President, the two Secretaries, with Messrs. Morgan, Nicola, and Paschall to be their Committee of Conference, to whom they gave special instructions as to the terms to be agreed upon.[30]

[30] The instructions were:

1. To agree upon a new name for the United Society (if the union can be accomplished) as near the names by which the Societies are already known as can be accomplished.

2. To agree that a Committee of an equal number out of both, be appointed to draw up a set of laws, for the government of the Society.

3. To agree upon an indifferent place, distinct from those where the two Societies usually meet, where both may convene the first time.

4. To treat generally on the terms of union, but not to conclude without laying them before the Society.

The Committees went on very harmoniously. They had several meetings, discussed various points, and exchanged lists of the members of their respective Societies. At last, on the 20th of December, the following treaty was concluded between the contending parties:

"Whereas two Societies subsist in this City, whose views and ends are the same, viz; the advancement of useful knowledge, and it being judged that their union would be of public advantage, it was agreed that such a union should take place, on terms of perfect equality, and for that purpose it was thought reasonable

1. That a new name, made out of the former names of both, should be fixed for the united Society, and the following was accordingly agreed to: viz,—The American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia for promoting useful knowledge,

2. That besides the members which stand proposed, no new members be proposed or elected by either Society till the Treaty is finished,

3. That the first meeting of the United Society, be at the College on Monday, the 2nd of January next, at six o'clock in the evening,

4. That there shall be one Patron, one President,

5. To endeavor to have a meeting with the other Committee as early next week as they can, and if possible report the result of their conference next Friday.

It will hereafter appear that the Society carried all their points.

three Vice-Presidents, one Treasurer, four Secretaries, and three Curators, and that all the said officers be chosen by ballot, at the first meeting, viz. the 2nd of January, (excepting only, instead of electing a Patron, a Committee of the United Society be appointed at said meeting, to wait on the Governor of the Province, and request him to be Patron) which officers shall continue in their respective offices till the first meeting of the United Society, which shall be in January 1770, when, and at every first meeting in January, which shall be in every year, there shall be a new election of officers,

5. That after the union, a Committee be appointed to form a new set of laws, taking in what may be thought proper out of the former laws of both Societies,

6. That each Society before the first of January pay off their respective debts, and the Treasurers of the former Societies shall account and settle with the new Treasurer to be chosen and pay him the balances in their hands,

7. That the books and all the curiosities, etc. of the former Societies, be deposited in the cabinet or elsewhere as the United Society shall direct,

8. That in the joint publication which it may be thought proper to make of the transactions of the former Societies, no preference shall be given to the papers of either, but they shall be arranged and digested according to their subjects and dates,

9. That there shall be a new book, of the future transactions of the united Society, beginning with the following preface or declaration, viz:

Whereas two Societies did heretofore subsist in this City, whose views and ends were the same, viz: the advancement of useful knowledge; and it having been judged that their union would be of public advantage, they have agreed to unite accordingly on terms of perfect equality, and for that purpose have taken the following new name "The American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia, for promoting useful knowledge."

This book, therefore, is to contain only the transactions of the United Society under the name aforesaid. What further relates to the terms of Union, as well as to the former transactions of each Society, being antecedent to the commencement of this book, may be found in the old books deposited in the Cabinet.

In pursuance of this agreement the first election of the officers of the United Society was held at the College in 4th Street on the 2nd of January 1769. I have said that lists of the members of the respective Societies had been exchanged. Those lists are extant. From them it appears that at the time of the Union, the Philosophical Society had 92 resident and 36 corresponding members, and the American had 78 resident members or Fellows and 67 Correspondents. The two Societies had been actively employed

in enlisting recruits, during the period of their dissentions.

I have been informed by the venerable Bishop White that the election for the President of the United Society was very warmly contested. James Hamilton was the candidate of the Governor and of his party, and he had been elected to that office by the Philosophical Society. Those of the popular party were for Franklin, the President of the American Society. Although the Philosophical Society had the greatest number of resident members, and consequently of votes, Benjamin Franklin was elected, by what majority does not appear. Thus the Democratic spirit triumphed over the efforts of the Government and of the aristocracy, a prelude, as it would seem, to the scenes that soon afterwards followed.

The Governor was greatly mortified and disappointed by this result. When a Committee of the United Society waited upon him to request his acceptance of the title of their patron, he fell into a violent passion, and in an angry tone replied: "I never shall be the patron of a Society that has for its President such a —— as Franklin." I have this anecdote from Bishop White. The records only say that the Governor declined.

Governor Penn had been the patron of the first Philosophical Society, had attended their meetings as such and had permitted them to meet in the State

House. We may judge of the excess of his mortification, and it is probable that he had been opposed even to the union, foreseeing its results. It may be easily understood why the United Society did not get a Charter of incorporation during the continuance of the proprietary government.

Thus the two Societies which during two years and more had been opposed to each other, and seemed to aim at each other's destruction, became firmly united. Their union was sincere, and they laboured harmoniously in promoting the cause of Science. Laws were made according to the Treaty, taken from those of the two Societies with great fairness. The division of the Society into Committees was taken from the Rules of the Philosophical Society, and the oral communication and discussion which give so much life to our proceedings, from those of the old Junto, which the American Society had retained. In 1771, they published the first volume of their transactions, which gained them credit and reputation in America and Europe.

From the facts above stated it appears to me to result:

1. That our Society dates its origin as far back as the year 1727 when the Junto was first established by Dr. Franklin.

2. That having been the founder of the two Societies which were united in 1768, that great man may justly be considered as the founder and the

father of our Society and as such will forever be entitled to our veneration and grateful remembrance. In a secondary degree, this Society is also indebted to the talents and labours of Charles Thomson, without whose exertions the Junto would not have been placed in a situation to contend with the Philosophical Society, which probably would not have been revived but for the jealousy which the Junto under his direction excited, and this Society would not have been formed and consequently would not now exist.

In writing this narrative, I have endeavored to preserve the strictest impartiality. The passions of those times have long since subsided, and it is far from my wish to revive them.

If this essay should ever be published, some of the most important documents might be added by way of appendix.

It may not be out of place to mention here the names of the officers of our Society for the years 1769 and 1770, as they are not in our printed Transactions, which begin only with 1771.

For 1769.

President, Benjamin Franklin

Vice-Presidents, Dr. Thomas Cadwalader, Dr. Thomas Bond, and Joseph Galloway

Secretaries, Charles Thomson, Rev. Wm. Smith, Thomas Mifflin, and John Ewing

Curators, Dr. Adam Kuhn, Dr. John Morgan, Lewis Nicola

Treasurer, Philip Syng.

For 1770.

President, B. Franklin

Vice-Presidents, Joseph Galloway, Dr. Thomas Bond, Samuel Rhoads

Secretaries, Rev. Dr. Wm. Smith, Charles Thomson, Thomas Mifflin, Geo. Roberts

Curators, Isaac Bartram, Dr. B. Rush, Owen Biddle

Treasurer, Philip Syng.

[The views set forth in the above paper by Mr. Du Ponceau were opposed in a communication made to the Society on the same date by J. Francis Fisher, Esq., of Philadelphia. These communications were referred to a special committee whose report follows. Unfortunately Mr. Fisher's paper has not been found in the Archives of the Society.]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

TO WHICH

MR. DU PONCEAU'S HISTORY WAS REFERRED

READ OCTOBER 15TH, 1841.

The Committee, to whom were referred, on the 26th of June 1840, the Communications of Mr. Du Ponceau and Mr. Fisher, relating to the early history of the Society, beg leave to present their report:—

The paper of Mr. Du Ponceau was presented on the 19th of June, 1840, but read at an adjourned meeting, held a week afterwards, when the Committee was appointed. It is universally admitted that the present Society was formed by the union of two Societies existing prior to 1769, which we shall designate, as the author of the paper has done, by the abridged titles of "Philosophical Society" and "American Society." In the outset of his paper, Mr. Du Ponceau states that a difference of opinion exists whether the American Society was a continuation of the Junto instituted by Franklin in 1727, or a different association of more recent date. Among those who hold the latter opinion, Mr. Du Ponceau mentions Mr. Sparks, who expresses it, or at least his doubts on the point, in the first volume of his life of Franklin. As the author of the paper holds this opinion to be erroneous, and as he believes the work

of Mr. Sparks is destined to go to posterity, he expresses his desire to correct it, and to give the reasons for his "fullest convictions that the "American Society" was no other than the Junto established by Franklin."

The opinion thus published by Mr. Sparks was founded upon statements furnished, at his request, by Mr. Fisher. The latter, conscious of this fact, and being satisfied that the paper of Mr. Du Ponceau, when read, would be found to object to the account given of the origin of the Society by Mr. Sparks, felt himself called upon to mention that account, as alone answerable for it. Accordingly, between the presentation and reading of Mr. Du Ponceau's paper, Mr. Fisher prepared the Communication, which was referred to this Committee at the same time with that of Mr. Du Ponceau.

Since the reference of the Communications, the Committee have received from the authors, the following papers, to which, though not formally referred to them, they have given attentive consideration.

1. Mr. Du Ponceau to Mr. Kane, June 29th, 1840.
2. Note by Mr. Du Ponceau to his paper, June 30th.
3. Mr. Fisher to Mr. Du Ponceau, June 30th.
4. Mr. Du Ponceau's answer to Mr. Fisher, July 1st.
5. Mr. Fisher to the Committee, Nov. 13th.[1]

The Committee, fully sensible of the interest felt

[1] These papers are not in the Archives of the Society.

by the members in the early history of the Society, have devoted considerable time to researches, in the hope of shedding additional light to that thrown by the labours of Mr. Du Ponceau and Mr. Fisher, in clearing up the doubtful points in our Annals. They have had a number of meetings, appointed Sub-Committees to confer with surviving members of several families, in the hope of obtaining valuable papers, and examined the Franklin Manuscripts in the possession of the Society. Though they have met with disappointments in several quarters, still they trust that their labours have not been without fruit, at least in the acquisition of some facts and authorities, not heretofore known, or made available.

In tracing the early history of the Society, the point of great difficulty is to determine the origin of the "American Society." It is an undisputed fact that this Society had been called "The Junto." It was the recognized name of the association, as appears from the Minutes in our possession, until the 13th of Dec. 1766, when it was changed to "The American Society for promoting and propagating Useful Knowledge, held in Philadelphia." Now the minutes of this body are not known to exist at an earlier date than Sept. 22nd, 1758; and hence the question arises,—is the Junto of which we have minutes, and which was afterwards called the "American Society," a continuation of the Junto, established by Franklin in 1727? In examining this ques-

tion, the Committee, to promote perspicuity, propose to call the Junto, which changed its name to the "American Society," the *Society-Junto,* and that established by Franklin, the *Franklin-Junto.*

At first blush, nothing can be more natural than to suppose that the Society-Junto was no other than the Junto established by Franklin; and, indeed, the organization of the two associations presents so striking an agreement in one particular, that it seems to confirm the truth of the first impression. But when the question is examined more narrowly, it is remarkable to observe how numerous the facts are which militate against the opinion that the two Juntos were the same Association at different periods of its existence.

The striking agreement, above referred to, consists in the fact that both Juntos adopted four qualifications, in nearly the same words, upon the initiation of members. In order to place this coincidence in the fairest light, the Committee subjoin them in parallel passages.

Franklin-Junto.	*Society-Junto.*
"Any person to be qualified, to stand up, and lay his hand upon his breast, and be asked these questions, viz:	The member elected shall be "qualified by the Chairman after the following manner:— "Standing up, and laying his hand upon his

1. Have you any particular disrespect to any present members? *Answer.* I have not.

2. Do you sincerely declare that you love mankind in general, of what profession, or religion soever? *Answer.* I do.

3. Do you think any person ought to be harmed in his body, name or goods for mere speculative opinions, or his external way of worship? *Answer.* No.

4. Do you love truth for truth's sake, and will you endeavor impartially to find and receive it yourself, and communicate it to others? *Answer.* Yes."

2 Sparks' Franklin 12.

breast, he shall be asked the following questions:

1. Have you any objection, or any personal dislike to any member of this Society?

2. Do you love mankind in general, of what nation, religion, or profession soever they be?

3. Do you think any one ought to be injured in his estate, character, or person for his mere speculative opinion in matters of religion?

4. Do you love truth for truth's sake, and will you endeavor impartially to find it out, and freely communicate it to others?

Junto Minutes, Part 1, 84.

Notwithstanding this striking coincidence in organization between the two Juntos, which, it is admitted, could not have been the result of accident, the Committee are of opinion that they were distinct

bodies. The reason for their opinion, they will proceed to state as briefly as may be compatible with the difficulty of the subject; and, afterwards, they will throw out some conjectures, in explanation of the fact, that the two Juntos, notwithstanding their being distinct associations, had the same qualifications for the initiation of members.

The Committee will first proceed to consider what light may be shed on the question by a comparison of the list of members, known to have belonged severally to the two Juntos. And here it may be remarked that if the Society-Junto, so far as its minutes have come down to us, does not embrace in its list any of the surviving members of the Franklin Junto, it is fatal to the supposition of the identity of the two associations; unless it can be satisfactorily explained why the survivors of the latter are not recognized in the proceedings of the former.

The members of the Franklin-Junto, so far as their names have come down to us, were Benjamin Franklin, Joseph Brientnal, Thomas Godfrey, Nicholas Scull, William Parsons, William Mangridge, Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, George Webb, Robert Grace, William Coleman, Hugh Roberts, Philip Syng, Enoch Flower,' Joseph Wharton, William Griffiths, Luke Morris, Joseph Turner, Joseph Shippen, Joseph Trotter, Samuel Jervis, and Samuel Rhoads, [and Thomas Hopkinson. (See autobiography in Sparks, Vol. I, p. 138.)] . In all 22 [23]. *1 Sparks 81, et. seq.*—

Roberts Vaux, 15 Hazard's Register, 183. The existing members of the Society-Junto in September 1758, the date of the earliest extant minutes, were Francis Rawle, Charles Thomson, Stephen Wooley, Peter Chevalier, J. Mather, Philip Syng, Jun., Isaac Paschall, Edmund Physick, William Franklin, Joshua Howell, William Hopkins, and Paul Jackson; total twelve. *See Junto Minute book; as also Tabular Statement marked A,* of the attendance of the Society-Junto members, appended to this Report.[1] By this *Statement*, it will be found that these twelve members continued to meet more or less regularly, except William Franklin, who was always absent, until the 20th of June, 1760, when Samuel Powel, elected the previous March, took his seat for the first time. Philip Syng is usually recorded without the affix Junior; but in the minutes of three meetings; namely,—those of Jan. 19th, Nov. 30th, Dec. 14th, 1759, he is entered as Philip Syng, Jun. This member, who died in November 1760, was the son of Philip Syng, of the Franklin-Junto, who will, to prevent confusion be hereafter designated, in this report, as Philip Syng, Sen.

Of the members of the Franklin-Junto, Franklin, [William] Coleman, Hugh Roberts, Philip Syng, Sen. and Samuel Rhoads are known to have been still living in Sep. 1758. The question here arises, why are they not mentioned, as members, in the minutes of the Society-Junto?

[1] Not reproduced.

The Committee will first inquire why Franklin is not mentioned as a member. This objection to the supposition that Franklin was a member of the Society-Junto, is examined by Mr. Du Ponceau. He says, p. 17, Franklin "was in England, and it was unknown when he should return. He was probably more considered at that time as the founder and patron of that Club (for such in fact it was) than as one of its active members." Again, he remarks, (page 18) "as his representative as it were, we find his son William Franklin in this list of members, though he does not appear to have been a very constant attendant. He went often to the country,—probably to New Jersey, of which he was appointed Governor about the time when this volume ends."

In judging of the probability of these explanations, it must be borne in mind that Franklin arrived in England, accompanied by his son, in July 1757, and returned with him on the 1st of Nov. 1762, after an absence of more than five years. If the explanation of Mr. Du Ponceau be admitted, it will go to show that while Franklin, though a member, is omitted to be mentioned on the minutes, because he was absent in England, his son is at the same time recognized as a member, and his absence from the meetings, recorded twenty-one times. Is it conceivable that the father would not be noticed at all on the minutes, and the son so frequently, under circumstances so similar for both, if the father had

been a member? It is true that Mr. Du Ponceau suggests that Franklin was considered rather as the founder and patron of the Club, than as one of its *active members;* but granting this, would not the Society-Junto be anxious, nevertheless, to recognize him as a member, if he were such, and record him as absent in England, as they did his son. Again, Mr. Du Ponceau remarks in the same page (18), The Club "would probably have been dissolved, like so many others, if Franklin had not exerted himself by his presence while here, and by his correspondence while abroad, to keep it alive." The Committee would here inquire how far the above surmises tally with the supposition, just before expressed by Mr. Du Ponceau, that Franklin, inasmuch as he was never mentioned on the minutes of the Society-Junto, was considered rather as the founder and patron of the Club than as an active member!

But, in tracing the progress of the Society-Junto, a new objection arises to the supposition that Franklin was one of its early members. This Junto, under the changed name of "The American Society for promoting and propagating Useful Knowledge, held in Philadelphia," which was adopted on the 13th of Dec. 1766, elected Franklin one of its members, on the 19th of February 1768. The name was again changed in September 1768, the new title given being "The American Society held at Philadelphia for promoting Useful Knowledge," which name it con-

tinued to bear until its union with the Philosophical Society on the 2nd of January 1769.

It is natural to ask, why was Franklin, if a member of the Society-Junto, elected into a continuation of the same association? The solution of this difficulty is thus given by Mr. Du Ponceau. "This (his election into the Society) was probably done, *ex majore cautelâ,* his son Governor Franklin, having been admitted without an election, at the preceding meeting, on merely signing the amended rules, on the ground that he had been a member of the ancient Society (the Junto), which rule of admission, they said, was concluded on, in reviving the Society. But Franklin was in England, and could not sign the amended articles, it was thought best to elect him. The Society probably contemplated to make him their President, and wished to avoid all dispute, particularly if a union should take place, which might not have been quite despaired of."

The Committee deem it very unlikely that the membership of Franklin in the Society-Junto from its beginning, if it really existed, should be nowhere noticed on the Minutes. Such a membership would have been a cherished fact, not to be disregarded in making up the records. Nor will absence in England explain the omission, since a contemporaneous absence of William Franklin did not prevent them from recording him, on numerous occasions, as absent, and sometimes in the express words, "absent

in England." Again, it does not appear how the motive of greater caution should induce the Society to introduce Franklin by a new election. If the members were conscious of the fact of his fellowship, they had nothing to do, in view of a probable union with the Philosophical Society, but to insert his name on their exchanged list, as an early member; as they did the name of Charles Thomson, Isaac Paschall, Edmund Physick, William Franklin, Joshua Howell, and William Hopkins, who, if elected at all, must have been elected before the 22nd of September 1758, the date of the earliest extant minutes. But, even conceding that Franklin was a member from an early period of the Society-Junto, though the minutes show no trace of his name as such, would not his renomination for membership be coupled with some remark on the minutes, alluding to his early membership, in order to secure the credit of the fact to the Association? The adoption of Mr. Du Ponceau's views that the election of Franklin was a re-election, makes it necessary to suppose that the American Society, the continuation of the Society-Junto, voluntarily gave a recent date to Franklin's admission; whereas, by omitting to re-elect, they would have been entitled to place his name among the list of the early members. In reference to a contemplated union with the Philosophical Society, no dispute could have arisen, as to who were or were not members; as the latter body would not have the right to

call in question the accuracy of the list which might be communicated.

Mr. Du Ponceau is a little inaccurate in saying that Governor Franklin was admitted at the meeting preceding that at which Dr. Franklin was elected, on merely signing the Amended Rules etc. The fact is, he was offered an admission on these terms, but he never availed himself of the offer, having never attended or signed. The minute making the offer is in these words:—

"His Excellency William Franklin, Esq., being now the only member of the ancient Society who has not signed the rules in this book, Dr. Evans is desired to inform him, that, agreeable to what was concluded on in reviving the Society, if he chooses to sign our Rules and give us a meeting, he shall be considered as a regular member." *Junto Minutes, Part 2, 82.*

By this extract it appears that William Franklin is deemed to be the only member of the ancient Society who had not signed the Rules in the Second Part of the Junto Minute book. Now, if Franklin had been a member of the ancient Society here referred to, this would not have been true; for he had never signed.

Of the twelve members with which the minutes of the Society-Junto begin, Francis Rawle and Philip Syng, Jun. are known to have been dead at the time referred to (February 12, 1768); Chevalier had for-

feited membership; Wooley, Mather and Jackson had long since moved away, and in 1768, were probably dead, as they are not reported as members on the exchanged list. Of the remaining six, Thomson, Isaac Paschall, and Physick had signed. By this statement it would seem that Joshua Howell and William Hopkins were also members of the ancient Society who had not signed in the book referred to, as well as William Franklin. The Committee cannot explain why, in the extract above given from the minutes, Howell and Hopkins are over-looked, unless it is because they had signed in the first part of the Junto minute book.

In pursuing the chain of evidence in relation to the point under consideration, the Committee will anticipate a little, by calling the attention of the Society to a letter from Charles Thomson to Dr. Franklin, contained in Mr. Fisher's communication. It has already been mentioned that Dr. Franklin was elected a member of the American Society, the continuation of the Society-Junto, on the 19th of February, 1768. On the 4th of November following, he was elected its first President under a new organization of officers; namely,—a President, Vice-President, etc. instead of the former one, of Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. At the same election, Thomson was chosen one of the Secretaries, and it became his duty, as such, to inform Franklin of his election. The letter above referred to, dated

November 6th, 1768, was written on this occasion, and contains the following remarkable passage:

"You remember the Society to which I belonged, which was begun in 1750. By the death and removal of some of the members, it dwindled for some time to that degree that I was apprehensive of its dissolution."

After describing the revival of the Society, he goes on, first to inform Franklin that he was elected a member of it on the 19th of February 1768, and subsequently its President.

Is it conceivable that Thomson did not know that Franklin was an early member of this Association, if he really were such? Or, if it be admitted that he knew the fact, supposing for a moment that it was a fact, and that his recent election was to secure his fellowship beyond dispute, would he have written as he did to Franklin? Instead of saying "You remember the Society to which *I* belonged" he would have said "to which *we* belonged." In place of introducing the fact of his election without comment, he would have alluded to his early membership as a known fact, and asked him not to be surprised at his new election, as it was intended to fix his membership beyond dispute.

It has already been mentioned that the earliest known minutes of the Society-Junto, are dated September 22nd, 1758. They begin abruptly, and evidently relate to an Association which had existed

for some time. The internal evidence of the minute book does not go farther back than the 18th of December 1757, from which date room-rent and "necessaries" appear to have been paid for; and it was not until the letter of Charles Thomson came to light, that our Society has been enabled to fix 1750 as the year in which the Society-Junto was established.

It is, indeed, true that Mr. Du Ponceau controverts this position in the supplementary comments which he furnished to the Committee since he had the opportunity of examining Mr. Fisher's communication. Our venerable President conceives that the Society of 1750 is really the same as the Franklin-Junto, though it may have had its interruptions, breaking its continuity. He furthermore, conceives that great weight must be given to the assertion of the Rev. Dr. William Smith, in his Eulogium on Franklin in 1792, that the Franklin-Junto "became at last the foundation of the *American Philosophical Society.*" If it became the foundation of our Society, it could only have become such through the Society-Junto, which is thus proved, admitting Dr. Smith's accuracy, to be identical with it. But Thomson's testimony is directly contradictory, that the Society-Junto began in 1750. Now Mr. Du Ponceau remarks, both Smith and Thomson were men of veracity and endeavors to reconcile their statements by supposing that Thomson did not know that the Society, to which he referred in his

letter, was really the Franklin-Junto revived, after, perhaps, an interruption; but mistook it for a new Society. Now the Committee conceive that this is not a question of veracity between two men, where a contradiction must be explained away, in order to avoid the imputation of untruth to one of the parties. On the contrary, they view it only as a question of the probable accuracy of two gentlemen, in relation to a doubtful point. Under this aspect of the question, they apprehend that Thomson is more likely to be accurate, writing in 1768, than Smith in 1792. Besides, Dr. Smith, preparing an Eulogium, and not a formal history of the Society, might easily have fallen into the natural error of supposing the existence of but one Junto, an opinion which some members of this Committee admit they entertained, before they had investigated the subject.

If, however, weight is still to be given to the assertion of Dr. Smith, which, it may be remarked, is loosely expressed in not alluding to the Philosophical Society as part of the foundation of our Society, the Committee think it is completely neutralized by the statement contained in the following extract from Dr. Thomas Bond's oration before our Society, delivered on the 21st of May 1782.

Franklin "gradually established many necessary institutions, among which was this Philosophical Society, so early as '43, when the plan was formed and published, the members chosen, and an invita-

tion given to all ingenious persons to co-operate and correspond with them on the laudable occasion."

Here Dr. Bond distinctly recognizes the Philosophical Society as the elder parent of our institution, and its earliest date to be 1743.

The Committee, having considered the assumption that Franklin was a member of the Society-Junto, because it was no other than the Franklin-Junto, and examined all the suggestions thrown out by Mr. Du Ponceau to explain why, being a member, he is never mentioned as such on the minutes, as either present or absent, will now proceed to give, as more immediately connected with this part of the subject, a connected view of what is known or probable in relation to the Society-Junto.

Besides the minutes of this Junto in the possession of the Society, the Committee have no other source of information than the important letter of Charles Thomson already referred to. These minutes were originally in two volumes; one, commencing with September 22nd, 1758, the other, with April 25th, 1766. At the end of the first volume, some irregular minutes of the Society, after the union (namely from 1774 to 1779) had been inserted. Mr. J. Francis Fisher, at the time one of our Secretaries, kindly undertook to arrange our early minutes, and with that view took to pieces the first volume above referred to, in order to separate the part relating to the united Society, and had the Junto part of it

substantially bound, in one volume, with what was originally called the second volume of the minutes of the Junto. It is thus explained why there are two sets of paging in the Junto minute book, which makes it necessary to distinguish what were originally the first and second *volumes,* as the first and second *parts.*

The Committee, relying on the statement in Charles Thomson's letter, date the beginning of the Society-Junto in 1750. What happened between that year and the 22nd of September, 1758, the date of the earliest minutes, the Committee have no means of determining. It is certain, however, that the Society had been meeting for sometime; for the book opens abruptly with a minute of the above date, without any indication of a commencement after an interruption. It continued to meet with few interruptions, or omissions from the minutes, until February 9th, 1761, when a hiatus occurs, until the 7th of August succeeding; though a note is given in the handwriting of Charles Thomson, that in the interval "the meetings were usually kept up, but so few attended, and so little was done, that no minutes were made." *Junto Minute Book, Part 1, 81.* In this note, an intermediate meeting on the 30th of July, is incidentally mentioned, at which the "Company" agree to a set of Rules, prepared by Edmund Physick and Charles Thomson, who had been appointed to recollect and draw them up, "as

agreeable as possible to the ancient Rules and By-Laws." These Rules immediately follow this note, and form the first record, occurring in the minutes, of the Laws by which the Junto was governed. Here the four remakable qualifications of members are first given.

From the 7th of August, the Society-Junto continue to meet regularly until the 16th of October, after which no minutes are recorded until September 3rd, 1762. In this interval of eleven months, no meetings took place, as is shown by a remark entered on the minutes on the 10th of September, 1762, to the following effect:—"As Charles Moore was formerly ballotted for and approved, and E. Physick, who was appointed to speak to him, informs that the only reason for not introducing him, was that Mr. Moore was about taking a journey to Maryland, soon after which the Society was discontinued; now we are met again and he is returned, E. Physick is desired to speak to him, and if he is willing to become a member, to introduce him next evening." Now Charles Moore was elected on the 2nd of October 1761, and two meetings are recorded subsequently, before the suspension of the meetings above referred to. The meetings having been thus resumed on the 3rd of September, 1762, as above stated, six meetings, and two attempts at meetings took place, up to the 22nd of October following, being the only meetings recorded this year. The minutes of the

22nd of October close the *first part* of the Junto minute book.

After this time, no minutes are known to exist, until the 25th of April 1766, an interval of three and a half years, when the *second part* of the Junto minutes begins. The question here arises, did the Junto meet during the whole or a part of this interval, the minutes having been lost; or was there a suspension of the Society for the whole period? It is not possible to answer this question positively; but there is good reason to believe that some meetings took place in this interval. In the first place, the minutes open without any allusion to a suspension of meetings; but, on the contrary, in a manner to indicate continuity with meetings recently held. The turns of members to act as Chairman, and to propose queries are mentioned; and at a meeting held shortly afterwards, (namely, on the 23rd of May) Owen Biddle and Isaac Paschall are referred to as having been appointed to revise the Laws; and as their appointment is not recorded in the minutes beginning with the 25th of April 1766, it is evident that they must have been charged with that duty at a meeting earlier than that with which the second part of the Junto minute book opens. Besides these considerations, four members, Moses Bartram, Isaac Zane, Joseph Paschall and Owen Biddle, are recorded as present in this second part, whose elections are not contained in the minutes in the possession

of our Society; and two others, Isaac Bartram and James Pearson, though elected at an early period, are not known to have been introduced. It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that the first four names were elected and introduced, and the last two introduced within the long period for which we possess no minutes. Taking this view of the subject, the chasm in the Junto minutes of three and a half years, is not to be viewed as indicative necessarily of a suspension of the Society, but to be attributed rather to the loss of the records. This is also the opinion of Mr. Du Ponceau, and the Committee is happy to agree with him on this point.

The draught of revised Laws, prepared by Owen Biddle and Isaac Paschall, was finally passed on the 30th of May 1766. They are the Junto Laws, but slightly altered, already alluded to as adopted on the 30th of July 1761. The four qualifications are still retained, but the name Junto is omitted, and the title of the Society, held under advisement until the 13th of December 1766, when the name "The American Society for promoting and propagating Useful Knowledge, held in Philadelphia," was adopted. Thus, though the Society changed its name, its Junto organization was still preserved.

After this period, the Society underwent no change in its name or organization, until the 23rd of September 1768, when it became "The American Society held at Philadelphia for promoting Useful

Knowledge," which title it continued to bear until its union with the Philosophical Society on the 2nd of January 1769. On the occasion of this last change of name, the Laws were much altered, the Junto qualifications were dispensed with, and an "Obligation" to be signed by members, substituted. Instead of having merely a Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, the Laws called for a President, Vice-President, two Secretaries, three curators, and a Treasurer. The election under this new organization took place on the 4th of November, and Dr. Franklin was chosen first President, as has been already mentioned in a former part of this Report. This sketch of the origin and progress of the Society-Junto is sufficient for this Report. For the details, the Society is referred to the *tabular statement, and to the Abstract from the Junto-Minute book,* marked B.

The Committee have already mentioned that they agree with Mr. Du Ponceau in believing it probable that meetings of the Society-Junto took place within the long period for which we possess no minutes; but they cannot go so far as to suppose with him, that an intermediate volume of minutes did exist, but was lost, comprising that period. Our President rests his opinion mainly on the fact that Dr. Smith, in his Eulogium on Franklin, tells us "that a book containing many of the questions discussed by the Junto, was, on the formation of the American Philo-

sophical Society, put into his hands for the purpose of being digested, and in due time published among the Transactions of that body." Mr. Du Ponceau thinks it probable that this book was the intermediate volume which he infers to have existed, and attempts to fix its date by a question quoted from it by Dr. Smith; namely,—"How may the possession of the Lakes be improved to our advantage," which, he says, judging historically, could "only have been asked after the cession of Canada in 1763." But it is not necessary to bring any ingenious reasoning to bear upon this point; for the Committee find that the identical question, above quoted, was proposed by Isaac Paschall on the 5th of October 1759. *See Junto Minute book, under that date, Part 1, p. 39.* Thus the attempt to fix the date of an intermediate volume of minutes fails; and the Committee may add their strong conviction, that the book referred to by Dr. Smith, was no other than the first part of the present Junto Minute book, which was originally the first volume of Junto Minutes. This book contains "many of the questions discussed by the Junto," and is preceded by a list of some of them. So strongly, however, is Mr. Du Ponceau impressed with the belief in the existence of an intermediate volume, that he reasons upon it as a fact, and says, "The loss of the missing volume is so much the more to be regretted, as it included a period when Franklin was in this country, and probably took an active

part in the Junto proceedings." p. 19. It is hardly necessary to add, that the Committee, having given a decided opinion that Franklin was not a member of the Society-Junto until February 1768, are fully convinced that he never took any part, active or otherwise, in its proceedings.

Having considered the question, why Franklin, if a member of the Society-Junto became the founder of the Franklin-Junto, was never recognized as such in the former until a late period, and then by *election,* and answered the explanations given of the silence of the Society-Junto minutes in relation to the point; the question recurs, why were not William Coleman, Hugh Roberts, Philip Syng, Sen., and Samuel Rhoads, the other surviving members of the Franklin-Junto during the existence of the Society-Junto, recognized as members of the latter?

Mr. Du Ponceau, in his paper, recognizes Coleman and Franklin as the only survivors of the Franklin-Junto, at the time of the union which formed the present Society, p. 11. Mr. Fisher mentions a third, Hugh Roberts, and very naturally inquires, why is he not mentioned, as either present or absent, on the minutes of the Society-Junto, especially as Franklin, in a letter to him, dated February 26th, 1761, says, "You tell me you sometimes visit the ancient Junto." The letter of Roberts, to which Franklin's is an answer, was probably written in the latter part of 1760, and for that year we possess the minutes of

the Society-Junto for every month except October, and it will be found that not only the names of members present, but those of absentees are recorded. Mr. Du Ponceau, in his letter to Mr. Kane, answers this objection thus:—"Mr. Roberts, at that time, was advanced in age, and full of business. He was not probably a regular member of that Club, subject to fines, and contributing to their expenses. He was, I suppose, welcome to their meetings as an old associate, and in that sense, I presume, his friend Franklin urged him to attend the meetings. In that case his name would not necessarily appear in the list of present and absent members at the head of the minutes of each meeting." In reply to this explanation it may be urged that Mr. Roberts in 1760 was only 54 years of age, and that the usage of the minutes being to note those present, the name even of an honorary member, admitting that there were such, would have been recorded. What makes this more probable, is a passage in the minutes of February 9th, 1761, when the members met at supper at Whitebread's, at which George Bryan, *a former member,* is recorded as present by invitation. Again, if Roberts was a member, honorary or not, of the Society-Junto, why does not his name appear in the list of members furnished to the Philosophical Society at the time of Union? The same remark applies to William Coleman, on the assumption of his membership in the Society-Junto. Surely these

names would not have been overlooked, in giving the list of surviving members to a rival Society, with a view to a union with it. The Philosophical Society did not act thus; for this very William Coleman is reported as an original member, dating from 1743, though, so far as the minutes of this Society in our possession show, he never attended the meetings. It may be added that Hugh Roberts, who Mr. Du Ponceau supposes was, in 1760, a member of the Society-Junto, though not a regular one on account of his advanced age and full business, was, in January 1768, elected a member of the Philosophical Society. It is true, however, that he never attended so far as the minutes show.

There still remain to be considered the names of two other individuals, namely, Philip Syng, Sen. and Samuel Rhoads, who were surviving members of the Franklin-Junto, during the existence of the Society-Junto, and the question recurs, why were they not present at the meetings or recorded in the list of members? These persons are not mentioned as survivors of the Franklin-Junto by our President, and the Committee will not undertake to conjecture what would be the course of his argument in regard to them. They will simply answer the question they have put, themselves, and say that Syng and Rhoads did not attend the meetings of the Society-Junto, because they were not members. It is true that Philip Syng, Sr. refers to a "Junto," in a letter

addressed to Franklin, dated March 1st, 1766, and which was found among the Franklin papers, in the possession of the Society. His words are "The Junto fainted last summer in the hot weather, and has not yet revived. Your presence might reanimate it, without which I apprehend it will never recover"

This suspension of "the Junto" is referred to the summer of 1765, and the question arises, does Philip Syng refer to the Society-Junto? Unfortunately, the summer of 1765 is within the long period of three and a half years, for which we have no minutes. If it be said that the expression "fainted last summer," implies that the Junto alluded to met immediately before that period, the Committee are willing to grant the inference; but the absence of minutes of such meetings is not to be taken as proof that the allusion cannot be to the Society-Junto; for the Committee have admitted it as probable, that some meetings took place within the period of the great chasm in the minutes, for reasons already given. A passage in a letter of Hugh Roberts to Franklin, dated May 20th, 1765, also found among the Franklin papers, bears upon this point. He says, "I sometimes visit the worthy remains of the ancient Junto, for whom I have a high esteem; but, alas, the political, polemical divisions have, in some measure, contributed to lessen that harmony we there formerly enjoyed." Thus the "Junto" was sometimes visited by Hugh Roberts in the spring of

1765, just before the time when Syng said it fainted. If the "Junto" here alluded to could be shown to be the Society-Junto, then the identity of the two would be proved. The absence of minutes for the spring of 1765 would seem to be against the supposition of identity; but so long as it is conceded that meetings may have taken place at some time within the period embraced by the long chasm, and consequently, that meetings may have been held in the spring of 1765, the minutes of which have been lost, the question cannot be decided by the mere absence of minutes. But the question is decided by other circumstances. Syng and Roberts, in the above extracts, evidently speak of an association in which they take a deep interest; and not of the Society-Junto, in which, considering that their names are never mentioned, although we possess the minutes of it for several consecutive years, they could not be plausibly alleged to take any interest at all. It is, therefore, clear to the Committee that they alluded, in their letters, to the Franklin-Junto, of which they are known to have been members, and which, in the absence of satisfactory proof to the contrary, must be held to have been an Association, distinct from the Society-Junto, and existing contemporaneously with it.

After the long interval for which we have no records of the Society-Junto, the minutes recommence on the 25th of April, 1766, a month and twenty-five

days after the date of Syng's letter. Now it may be alleged that the 25th of April 1766 was the date of a revival of the Association which is referred to by Syng, and which, he apprehends, "will never recover." The dates here give some plausibility to this supposition. But, assuming it for a moment to be well-founded, is it not reasonable to suppose that Syng, rejoiced at its revival, would have given to the Society-Junto the countenance of his presence; or are we to believe that, contrary to the plan of the minutes, he was sometimes present, without his name being recorded?

While, therefore, the Committee think it a strained inference that the survivors of the Franklin-Junto were members of the Society-Junto, it is remarkable to find that two of them, Syng and Rhoads, are active members of the Philosophical Society before the union, and of the United Society after it. Rhoads, indeed, was an original member of the Philosophical Society, dating from its establishment in 1743. Syng, however, was not elected until January 1768. Supposing them to have been members of any kind, irregular or honorary of the Society-Junto, afterwards the American Society, and for that reason never mentioned on the minutes, would they not at least have been included in the list of members handed to the Philosophical Society? Again, if it be alleged as probable that the Secretaries of the American Society forgot to insert the name of Syng and Rhoads

on their list of members, would not their names occurring in the Philosophical Society's list, remind them of their omission; or, finally, if the American Society were not aware of their membership, would not the individuals themselves remind them of it? But the supposition that Syng and Rhoads were members of the American Society becomes more difficult to believe, when we find them on the Committee of conference, appointed by the Philosophical Society, to treat with the American Society. This conference would have brought them so decidedly in contact with the American Society that their membership in it could not be overlooked; unless it be assumed that neither they themselves nor the American Society knew that they were members!

The Committee have said that Syng and Rhoads were active members of the Philosophical Society up to the time of union, and, afterwards, of the United Society. They were repeatedly present at the meetings of the former in the year 1768, and also frequent attendants of the United Society, of which Syng was elected first Treasurer, and Rhoads repeatedly chosen a Vice-President. Are these the kind of men that would probably have been entirely unnoticed by the American Society, if they had really been members of it?

The Committee believe that all of the difficulties connected with this subject will disappear upon the supposition of the distinct, and for a part of the

time, contemporaneous existence of the Franklin and Society-Juntos. From the autumn of 1727 until 1750, the Franklin-Junto can be traced, unembarrassed by the alleged existence of another Association of the same name. From that year, being the time of the establishment, according to Thomson, of the Society-Junto, the difficulty begins. On the 16th of July, 1753, and the 16th of September 1758, Franklin, in writing to Roberts, refers to the "Junto"; but as these dates occur between 1750, and September 22nd, 1758, for which interval we possess no minutes of the Society-Junto, these references throw no light on the question of the identity, or non-identity of the two Juntos. The next letter in which Franklin refers to "the Junto" is dated February 26th, 1761; and the Committee have already given their opinion that the allusion in it could not refer to the Society-Junto, as it mentions the occasional attendance of Hugh Roberts, who is not noticed as present or absent at any meeting preceding the date of the letter, though the minutes for that period are extant. Franklin was in Philadelphia from November 1762, to November 1764, but, unfortunately, these two years occur within the long interval for which we possess no Junto Minutes. The Committee have already given their reasons for believing that the allusions to "the Junto" that occur in the correspondence of Roberts & Syng with Franklin, in 1765–66, could not have meant the

Society-Junto. After these years, the Committee find no reference to "the Junto," until June 24th 1785, under which date Roberts wrote to Franklin as follows:—"Philip Syng, the only other surviving member here, of the old Junto, labours under infirmities, keeps much at home, where I can seldom go to visit him." *Hazard's Register, XV, 184.*

If the Franklin and Society-Juntos were the same, would Roberts speak of Philip Syng as the only other surviving member of the Junto in Philadelphia besides himself? Would he not rather have said, that besides himself, the surviving members of the Junto were Charles Thomson, Edmund Physick, Moses Bartram, Joseph Paschall, Owen Biddle, James Pearson, Samuel Powel, Nicholas Waln, Clement Biddle, Dr. John Morgan, not to mention others, who were members of the Society-Junto, still living, when Roberts wrote. Neither can it be contended that Roberts meant to say that Syng was the only other surviving original member; for neither Syng nor Roberts were original members of the Franklin-Junto. *See Franklin's list, 1, Sparks, 81.* While it is thus proved that the expression of Roberts, in this letter, is inconsistent with the supposition that the two Juntos were the same, it is perfectly accurate as applied to the Franklin-Junto, which evidently continued to meet a long time after it ceased to fill up vacancies by new elections, and, at last, became extinct by the death of the last survivor, Franklin.

The Committee are aware that Franklin, in 1771, fixes the duration of his Junto at about 40 years. His words are, alluding to William Coleman "Our friendship continued without interruption to his death, upwards of forty years; and the Club continued almost as long." Again he says, in a letter to Hugh Roberts, dated July 7th, 1765, "It wants but about two years of forty since it was established." Thus the Junto lasted almost as long as a friendship that had continued upwards of forty years; and as it began in 1727, it may be said, so far as this evidence goes, to have ceased to exist about the year 1767. Now, if this reasoning be admitted, it is fatal to the supposition that the Franklin-Junto was one of the parents of our Society; for the union took place on the 2nd of January, 1769. The Committee, however, do not lay much stress upon this reasoning; as Franklin, writing his Life in England in 1771, may not have been entirely accurate in dates. They rely more upon the fact that Franklin, in speaking of the duration of the Junto, never refers to its ceasing to exist, in consequence of its union with the Philosophical Society, a statement he would hardly have omitted to make in his Autobiography, if it had been a fact.

Upon the whole, the Committee incline to the opinion that the Franklin-Junto ceased to exist as an organized club of twelve about the year 1767; but continued to meet irregularly, without being kept up in number, for many years afterwards.

The Committee now come to consider the difficulty implied in the supposition of the existence of two Juntos meeting in this city at the same time. This difficulty is ably presented by Mr. Du Ponceau. Speaking of the assumption of the existence of two juntos, one begun in 1727, the other in 1750, and supposing both to have ended in 1768, or 69, he says, in his note to Mr. Kane:—

"During these 18 or 19 years, there would have been two Societies in Philadelphia, same name, same objects, same rules, same exercises, same qualifications, in short, a fac-simile of each other. This appears, if not impossible, at least quite improbable.

"There would have been at least some difference in the name, as the New Junto, the Junto No. 2, or the like. Courtesy would have required it. Shop keepers do not take each others signs. It must have been, if otherwise, in opposition to Franklin's Junto, and an insult. It is not pretended. It would have produced confusion."

Two suppositions are admissible in explanation of the existence of two Juntos without involving the difficulties so forcibly urged by our President in the above extract. One is that the Franklin-Junto, through the suggestion of its members, caused the second Junto to be established, without revealing its own existence; the other, that it exercised its influence openly with its young friends, to induce them to establish a Society on the model of their own.

The first supposition is rendered plausible by the fact, that subordinate Clubs to the Junto were, at one time, secretly formed by different members of the original Club. This plan originated with Franklin, as a substitute for one of increasing the number of members of the original Junto beyond twelve, to which he was opposed. He says, "I was one of those who were against any addition to our numbers; but, instead of it, made in writing a proposal, that every member separately should endeavor to form a subordinate Club, with the same rules respecting queries, etc., and without informing them of the connection with the Junto." *Autobiography, 1, Sparks, 129.* Several of these subordinate Clubs were completed under different names; as the *vine,* the *union,* the *band.* In these Clubs it is true that the name "Junto" is not employed; but might not the idea of inducing their young friends to establish a similar association to the Junto, and under the same name, have been carried into effect in 1750, by the influence of its members, not known as such; it being a rule to keep the Institution secret? Under the circumstances of the assumed secrecy of the original Club, the members would feel no objection to suggesting the same name for its copy.

On the other supposition, which the Committee consider the more probable, the original Club may be supposed to have relinquished, about the year 1750, all intention of keeping up their original number of

twelve. To keep up this number, it would have been necessary, in all probability, to elect much younger men than those that remained of the original body. Instead, therefore, of bringing in younger men, they may have induced twelve, in whom they reposed confidence, to form a similar association and with the same name; for, if the original Club looked forward to its extinction, and kept its existence to a certain extent secret, it would rather desire than otherwise that the new association should take its name. The probability of the view here presented, is strengthened by the fact that several of the members of the Society-Junto were sons of members of the Franklin-Junto, as William Franklin, Philip Syng, Jr., and George Roberts.

Thus it is perceived that, adopting either of the suppositions suggested, the two associations would have had the same name and organization, and the simultaneous existence of a second Junto would have indicated neither opposition nor insult to the Franklin-Junto.

Towards the close of his paper, Mr. Du Ponceau speaks of the two parties, aristocratic and popular, into which the inhabitants of Pennsylvania were divided in 1768, and for some years previously, and correctly remarks that the artistocratic party made up the principal part of the Philosophical Society; while the American Society was composed of members from the popular party. Setting out from this gen-

eral proposition, the author infers the existence of a strong feeling of opposition between the two Societies. Thus, in one place he says, "I shall follow the two Societies in their mutual jealousies." p. 14. In another place he says, "In 1768, when the differences were at their height between the two Societies, we find him (Hugh Roberts) enlisted with that opposed to the old Junto." Again, he remarks, "In this state of things, the high aristocratic party could not see with unconcern, that an obscure Club, which, till then, had been unknown, should assume to form themselves into a learned Society, like those which in Europe bore royal titles," etc. p. 33.

Further on in his paper he says "The two parties seemed to lie on their oars, watching each other's motions. It was not until the year 1768, that the contest truly began and assumed a formidable aspect." pp. 33–34.

The Committee would here stop to inquire, are the expressions contained in the above extracts historically just?

The Committee are prepared to admit that a jealously existed between the two Societies, and that warmth and activity were displayed by the members of the respective bodies at the first election after the union, in order to secure the choice of their own President; but further than this they are not willing to go. They have carefully examined the minutes of the two Societies before the Union, and find, in

the manner in which the negotiation was conducted, the evidence of calmness, mutual respect, and the desire to avoid giving offense. It is, indeed, true that the American Society declined an election of its members, "en masse," into the Philosophical Society. At their meeting of the 5th of February, 1768, the American Society voted unanimously that the terms of union implied by the election of their members into the Philosophical Society by a general vote, were not equally honorable to both parties. Immediately after passing this vote, the following proposition was unanimously carried in the affirmative:—

"As the Gentlemen of the American Philosophical Society have conducted themselves politely towards this Society; is it not proper to draw up an answer to their proceedings, and deliver it to the Gentlemen of said Society?"

At the next meeting, the Committee appointed for the purpose, submitted their draught of an answer to the Philosophical Society. It is too long to be inserted here, but the Committee will transcribe the first paragraph, which is in these words:—

"That although the readiness of the American Philosophical Society to dispense with their law in order to ballot us into their Society, together with their respectful conduct on that occasion, might be deemed an honour to us as individuals; yet, as a Society, we cannot consider it in that light for the following reasons."

The answer, from which the above is an extract, was never delivered; for the very next day the American Society held a special meeting, which opens with the following minute:—

"Some of the members apprehending that the minute of our last meeting, if delivered, might give offence to some Gentlemen of the other Society, which they would cautiously avoid if possible, therefore proposed a meeting of the Society this day to consider that minute," etc. The result of the reconsideration is thus recorded:—

"The minute of the American Philosophical Society of the 2nd inst., which declares our election into that Society, being considered, it was unanimously determined that, as it was not on the terms proposed, we are under the necessity of declining the Union."

In the above calm and deliberate proceedings, the Committee can see nothing that has the appearance of a "contest," much less of a contest presenting "a formidable aspect."

We have the evidence of Bishop White that warmth and activity were displayed at the first election. The minutes show that 89 members voted. The total number of members at the time of the union was 251, —26 common to the two parent Societies; 102 belonging to the Philosophical Society, and 123 to the American Society. Deducting the members that resided out of the city and county, many of them in distant states and countries, there remain about 14

belonging to the two Societies, 69 to the Philosophical, and 41 to the American Society; total 124. As 89 voted, it shows how large a proportion of those, presumed to be present in the city and county, were active on the occasion. The resident members of the Philosophical Society were more numerous than the same members of the American Society; though the total number of the former Society, from having fewer non-resident members, was less than the total of the latter. From these facts it is evident that Franklin could not have been elected first President of the United Society, unless he had received considerable support from the members of the Philosophical Society. If the election had turned upon party or Society feeling solely, Ex-Governor Hamilton, the President of the Philosophical Society, would have been elected. No doubt the fact was, that it was felt and admitted that Franklin possessed a high philosophical reputation, that he was the founder of the Philosophical Society, though the President of the American Society, and that his name, which was known all over Europe, would give greater weight to the United Society than that of Hamilton. Actuated, no doubt, by some such motives, a sufficient number of the members of the Philosophical Society voted in favor of Franklin to secure his election.

It is true that John Penn, at the time Governor of the Province, was displeased at the result. It had been agreed, that the Governor for the time being,

should be the patron of the United Society, as he had been of the Philosophical Society before the union; and the Vice-Presidents, at the first meeting, were appointed a Committee to request him to be patron of the Society. At the next meeting, the Vice-President reported that the Governor had declined the office.

Mr. Du Ponceau, in his paper, has given the following anecdote, connected with the conduct of the Governor on this occasion, on the authority of Bishop White. When the Governor was waited upon, to request his acceptance of the title of patron, he replied, "I never shall be the patron of a Society that has for its President such a —— as Franklin." It is understood that the blank represents an opprobrious epithet, which was supplied in the reading of the paper before the Society. The same anecdote was related to the Chairman of this Committee on two occasions by Bishop White, and without any variation that he recollects. According to the version of the anecdote, as given to the Chairman, the reply of the Governor was "No, Gentlemen, I cannot consent to be the patron of a Society, whose first President is the greatest enemy of my family." As this anecdote was related in two different ways by Bishop White, both of which cannot be accurate, every one must be left to his own judgment, as to which version is most probably correct. There can be no doubt that the Governor felt vexed at the election of Franklin; but the Committee do not think it probable

that he used the harsh term attributed to him. His successor, Richard Penn, showed both better manners and better sense than to refuse the same honour; for, on the 22nd of January 1773, he attended, as patron, the oration of the Rev. Dr. Smith before the United Society, still under the Presidentship of Franklin. *See Chronological Statement, Marked C, under this date.*

There is reason to believe that the members of the Philosophical Society did not generally partake of the hostile feelings of the Governor towards Franklin. This may be inferred from the character of the second meeting of the United Society, at which 40 members were present,—5 common to the two parent Societies, 16 belonging to the Philosophical and 19 to the American Society. So large a number as 16 members of the Philosophical Society would hardly have been present at the first meeting after th election of Franklin, if deep dissatisfaction had been felt at the result.

The Committee now pass from the analysis of Mr. Du Ponceau's paper to a brief consideration of that of Mr. Fisher. The unsettled points relating to the early history of our Society, have been so fully discussed in what precedes, that little remains to be said in relation to the latter paper.

Mr. Fisher is, perhaps, not quite correct in saying that the Franklin-Junto "had no written communications, and possessed no library"; for Franklin says

that he published pieces in his newspaper, which he had read before the Junto; and that we had written papers for the Junto on the irregularities of the Watch, and on Fires. *1, Sparks, 123, and 132–33.* He also speaks of the members having, at his suggestion, clubbed their books in a common Library, though afterwards they were separated. *1, Sparks, 96. See also Chronological Statement.*

The suggestion thrown out by Mr. Fisher, that Philip Syng of the Society-Junto, was a son of Philip Syng of the Franklin Junto, is perfectly correct. He died in November, 1760, and his death is referred to, incidentally, in the minutes of the Society-Junto, about July 1761. *See Minutes, part 1, p. 81.*

Mr. Fisher is in error in stating that it was by the Philosophical Society "that the proposal was first made for an incorporation with the American Society." The first proposition came from the American Society, in the shape of a motion, passed unanimously on the 26th of January 1768, that a union with the Philosophical Society, on an equal footing, and on terms equally honorable to both was desirable, and would conduce to the public good. The next day, Dr. Morgan communicated this motion to Dr. Bond of the Philosophical Society; and the action taken by the latter Society upon it was to elect, by a general vote on the 2nd February following, the whole of the members of the American Society into their body.

In noticing the above inaccuracy, it is due to Mr. Fisher to state that he drew up his paper partly from recollection; for in a note, appended to his Communication, he says, "In the preceding sketch there may be several trifling errors, as I have depended on Mr. Sparks' Account of the Society and my own recollections."

The chief value of Mr. Fisher's Communication is given to it by the letter of Charles Thomson to Franklin, which he was so fortunate as to obtain through William B. Reed, Esq. This letter sheds much light on the unsettled points of the early history of our Society, and fixes the date of the establishment of the Society-Junto, as has been already mentioned.

The Committee are of opinion that the account given by Mr. Sparks of the origin of our Society, in the first volume of his Life of Franklin, p. 576, is substantially correct. There is, however, an unimportant error in the Statement, that, when the two Societies agreed to unite on equal terms, as they did after a renewal of the negotiation of union in November 1768," each, elected "all the members of the other." p. 578. No such mutual election ever took place.

An inconsistent and inaccurate statement is made in Mr. Sparks' second volume, p. 9, published four years earlier than the first volume, in which the Editor says, "Forty years after its establishment,"

the Junto "became the basis of the American Philosophical Society."

In view of all the facts that they have been able to collect, the Committee have come to the following conclusions:—

1. That the present Society was formed, on the 2nd of January 1769, by the union of the "American Philosophical Society" and the "American Society, held at Philadelphia for promoting Useful Knowledge."

2. That the Philosophical Society was founded by Franklin on the 14th of May 1743 [old style corresponding to 25th of May new style], this being the date of the publication of his "Proposal for promoting Useful knowledge among the British Plantations in America."

3. That the American Society was begun under the name of the Junto, and bore this name from the year 1750, the earliest recorded date of its existence, until the 13th of December 1766.

4. That the evidence before the Committee does not establish the identity of the Junto which was formed by Franklin in 1727, with that which afterwards became the American Society; though they appear to have been the same in many marked particulars.

5. That dating from the establishment of the elder parent-Society, our centennial anniversary should be celebrated on the 14th [25th, new style] of May 1843.

6. That Franklin, having established one of our parent-Societies, and furnished, in his Junto, the model of the other, is justly entitled to be called our founder.

In conclusion, the Committee congratulate the Society on the important accession to the knowledge of our early history, which has resulted from the labours of Mr. Du Ponceau and Mr. Fisher. Yet it must be admitted that chasms still remain in our early annals which require to be filled up, that doubts exist on some points, and discrepancies of opinion on others. The question here arises, shall we give publicity to the Society's early history in its present imperfect state; or shall we delay, in the hope of obtaining more facts? The Committee expresses themselves decidedly in favor of the latter course. They, therefore, recommend to the Society, the adoption of the following resolution:—

Resolved, that the papers of Mr. Du Ponceau and Mr. Fisher, which were read on the 26th of June 1840, together with the supplementary communications, be deposited in the Archives, as valuable contributions to the early history of the Society.

FRANKLIN BACHE,
J. K. KANE,
A. D. BACHE,
ROBLEY DUNGLISON.

October 15, 1841.

APPENDIX A.

A tabular statement of the attendance of members at the meetings from 1758 to 1768 which it is not considered necessary to reproduce.

APPENDIX B.

ABSTRACT FROM THE JUNTO MINUTE BOOK.

[Entries relating to purely scientific and philosophical discussions have been omitted in this transcription]

1758. *September 29.* Absent, W. Franklin in England.

October 27th. The members evidently become Chairmen and Secretaries in rotation.

November 3rd. Fines due from the 13th of Feb. to the 25th of August 1758 inclusive. Therefore the Club existed on the 13th of Feb. 1758.

November 10. "W. Franklin out of town."

December 1st. "The company resolved that as Peter Chevalier had been absent four nights successively, without sending an apology, that he is no longer to be deemed a member."

Dec. 22nd. "Wm. Franklin abroad."

Dec. 29th. Paul Jackson present as a member; but not previously mentioned either as present or absent.

1759. *Jan. 5.* C. Thomson proposed "Will it be most advantageous to the company to continue or discontinue keeping a minute book?"

19th. Agreed to keep a minute book. It was ap-

prehended that, if no minutes were kept, "fewer queries would be discussed than otherwise would be, and the Junto consequently less improved."

Turn as Secretary came round not much sooner than a year.

Feb. 2. "If this want of zeal, this disinclination to industry and due attendance should continue, is it not evident that a dissolution of the Society must speedily follow?" "As our anniversary will be held next Monday, when it is customary for us to express our good wishes for the Society's prosperity" etc. the company proposing to celebrate their anniversary, the Secretary is appointed to bespeak an entertainment suitable to the occasion.

Feb. 5. (Monday) Minutes at the Widow Gray's. "Wm. Franklin at sea."

"This night, agreeable to a fundamental law of this Society, the original laws were distinctly read, and also the bye-laws."

February 23rd. Edward Duffield ballotted for and approved. "Edm^{d}. Physick and Wm. Hopkins are appointed to speak to him."

Sep. 27th. "As several of the original laws have been abrogated or changed, and several Bye-Laws made now are in force, and which lie scattered upon and down in the book, E. Physick and Charles Thomson, the Committee before appointed, are desired to make a collection of such laws" etc.

1760. *February 1st.* Next Tuesday being our anni-

versary meeting, the Secretary was desired to bespeak a supper for the company of the Widow Gray.

June 20th. Sam. Powel introduced as a member and paid 20 shillings.

1761. *Feb. 6th.* "As there had not been proper notice given by the Secretary for the members to meet the 5th inst., the usual time of their anniversary, they agreed to spend a meeting together, in memory thereof, and desired Charles Thomson to bespeak a supper at Whitebread's."

Feb. 9th. "The following members met at W. Whitebread's; viz., Charles Thomson, E. Physick, I. Paschall, F. Rawle, W. Hopkins, and Joshua Howell, together with Geo. Bryan (a former member), who was invited by one of the company."

July 30th. "By the death of two members, P. Syng and F. Rawle, the absence of some who are abroad in England, and the sickness and necessary avocations of the few remaining, this Society has for some time, languished. The meetings were usually kept up. But so few attended and so little was done, that no minutes were made, and some thoughts were let in of giving up the room, and dissolving the Society. But as the Institution was, after long experience, found to be good, and much improvement as well as pleasure reaped from it; it was agreed first to try whether any measures could be fallen upon to revive its ancient spirit. The best way they judged to effect this, was turning back to the first principles, and

keeping close to the plan originally laid down. In order to do this 'twas necessary to have recourse to the original laws. The laws were lost or mislaid, so that they could not be found. After several searches to no purpose, it was at length agreed to appoint a Committee to recollect and draw up a set of Rules, as agreeable as possible to the ancient Rules and Bye-Laws, heretofore established, and now in force. Edmund Physick and Charles Thomson were nominated for this work, who, having drawn up the Rules, submitted them to the examination of the company on the 30th of July. As in some respects they seemed to differ from the ancient rules, a question arose whether the Company present had a right to enact these into Laws, or whether, if enacted, they could bind the whole Society. This led them into a consideration of the state of the Society. William Franklin and Samuel Powel are both in England, who, having at their departure and taking leave, desired to be continued as members, and promised an epistolary correspondence, ought, therefore, to be deemed such. But Paul Jackson, Stephen Wooley, and Joseph Mather, who are settled each in his profession, the first at a distance from this town, the two latter in other Provinces, could by no means have any right to interfere in making laws for the government and regulation of this Society, more especially as they contributed nothing towards the standing charges of the Society, nor even attended when

they chanced to be in town on the night of meeting. At most they were only to be considered as honorary members, who, upon removing to town, signing and conforming to the Rules of the Society then in force, should, without any ballot or new change, be admitted as members. So that the whole is reduced to Edmund Physick, Charles Thomson, Isaac Paschall, Joshua Howell, and William Hopkins (if he chooses to attend), and the two in England, whose return, being uncertain, ought not to interrupt the measures necessary to be taken for preserving the Society in being. This difficulty being thus got over, and the members present well satisfyed of their power, the Laws were read over, and after some alterations to make them more conformable to the original Rules and Bye-Laws, they were ordered to be entered in the book, and are as follow:—"

[Here follow the Rules with this heading.]

"*Rules of a Society meeting weekly in the city of Philadelphia for their Mutual Improvement in Useful Knowledge.*"

"1. That this Society, called The Junto, meet every Friday evening" etc.

6. The elections must be unanimous. The new member introduced and qualified thus:—

"Standing up and laying his right hand upon his breast, he shall be asked the following questions:—

"1. Have you any objection or any personal dislike to any member of this Society?

"2. Do you love mankind in general, of what nation, religion, or profession soever they be?

"3. Do you think any one ought to be injured in his estate, character, or person for his mere speculative opinions in matters of religion?

"4. Do you love truth for truth's sake, and will you endeavor impartially to find it out and freely communicate it to others?"

These questions being properly answered, and to the satisfaction of the company, the Rules shall be distinctly read by the Secretary, and subscribed by the person to be admitted, who shall thereupon be acknowledged a member, etc. etc.

Aug. 7. A meeting. Only those present, Edmund Physick, Isaac Paschall, and Charles Thomson, who signed the rules above referred to.

Aug. 14. Wm. Hopkins signs the laws.

Aug. 28th. John Cooper, elected the 14th, declines membership, because he belongs to a religious society which disapproves of Clubs, and because a pain in his head renders him incapable of close application.

Sep. 4th. Joshua Howell signed the laws.

Oct. 2nd. Charles Moore was ballotted for this evening, and approved.

Oct. 16, 1761 to *Sept. 3, 1762,* no minutes known to exist, and no meetings probably took place. See below, remarks in relation to Charles Moore.

1762. *Sep. 3.* The members of the Junto, desirous of continuing the Society, met this evening, having

again agreed with Mr. Caruthers for the room on the same terms on which we had it formerly, etc. etc.

Mr. George Roberts, having been formerly approved was now introduced and qualified as a member. [Signed the Laws, being the sixth name. See book.]

Sep. 10th. "As Charles Moore was formerly ballotted for and approved [see date, Oct. 2, 1761] and E. Physick, who was appointed to speak to him informs that the only reason for not introducing him was that Mr. Moore was about taking a journey to Maryland, soon after which the Society was discontinued. Now we are met again, and he is returned, E. Physick is desired to speak to him, and, if he is willing to become a member, to introduce him next evening."

Sep. 22nd. Three members present. "Conversation general."

From Oct. 22, 1762, to *April 25, 1766,* no minutes known to exist; but meetings probably took place, as members were evidently elected in the interval, whose names first appear on the minutes of April 25, 1766.

1766. *May 23rd.* "Owen Biddle and Isaac Paschall, who had been appointed by the company to revise their Laws, and to make a few alterations in them, informed the members this evening that they were finished, and desired the liberty of reading them, which, being agreed to, they were accordingly read, and received the approbation of those persons who

were present; but as the Company was not full, it was agreed they should be reconsidered the next evening."

30th. "The articles being read again this evening, the Company made some further alterations and then ordered them to be fairly copied in the book."

These articles immediately precede the Minutes of April 25, 1766. They have the same heading as the Rules mentioned at p. 102 of this Abstract:—viz, "Rules of a Society meeting weekly in the City of Philadelphia for their mutual improvement in Useful Knowledge." Comparing the two draughts, there are to be found certain transpositions and verbal alterations. Besides these, the following changes appear in the new draught.

1. In the first article the name is changed from "The Junto" to "The American Society for promoting and propagating Useful Knowledge, held in Philadelphia." This change, however, was not made until the 13th of December following, which date see further on, p. 111.

2. The second article is the same in both draughts, viz, "That no person be admitted into the Society occasionally."

3. The third article of the new draught provides for each member serving as Chairman and Secretary for four weeks in alphabetical rotation, being part of the third, and the whole of the fourth article of the old draught.

4. The fourth article defines the duties of the Chairman and Secretary, being the remainder of the third article of the old draught. The Secretary, among other duties, is to provide necessary refreshments. The only new provision appears to be that the Secretary shall record "all new discoveries or improvements in Arts and Sciences, made by or communicated to the Company."

5. The fifth article provides for a treasurer, to be elected twice a year. Same as the fifth article of the old draught.

6. This article provides for unanimity in the election of members, and for the same qualifications of members elect as is Art. 6 of the old draught. The four questions propounded are verbatim the same as in the old draught. See p. 102 of this Abstract. The new article omits the provision of a payment by a new member of 20 shillings, which is contained in the old.

7. This article relates to members presenting queries for discussion, and is essentially the same as the first paragraph of the old article.

8. This article relates to members presenting compositions to improve their "style and manner of writing." It is essentially the same as the second paragraph of the old article.

9. This article relates to the mode of conducting discussions. It is not materially altered from Art. 8 of the old draught.

10. This article relates to the preservation of courtesy and temper in debates, and is the same as Art. 9 old Rules, except that expulsion is provided for, in case a member persists in rudeness, after reprimand by the chair.

11. This article for the mode of appropriating money. It is the same as Art. 10 of the old Rules.

12. This article relates to fines for absence, lateness, omission to furnish queries in turn, neglects of duty by the Secretary, etc. and is nearly the same as Art. 11 of the old Rules.

13. This article provides for the exclusion of members, who absent themselves for three successive nights, being in health and in town, and who do not make sufficient apology. It is the same as Art. 12 of the old Rules.

14. This article forbids, under the penalty of reprimand or expulsion, the revealing of the secrets of the Society. It is the same as Art. 13 of the old Rules.

15. This article runs thus: "This Society shall dine or sup together once in every year, namely, on the first day of May, the better to preserve that friendship which is proposed by the members, at which time these Rules shall be read." Art. 14 of the old Rules is the same, except that the anniversary is fixed for the first Friday in February, instead of the first of May, as above.

16. This article, which is the last, relates to the mode of altering the Rules or Bye-Laws, and is the same as Art. 15, or the last, of the old Rules.

By death, forfeiture of membership, and removal without expressing a wish to continue members, the Junto on the 30th of July 1761, was reduced to seven members, viz.

Edmund Physick,
Isaac Paschall,
Charles Thomson,
William Hopkins,
Joshua Howell
} present in Philadelphia, and

William Franklin,
Samuel Powel.
} absent in England.

The old laws having been lost, Physick and Thomson were appointed a Committee to draw them up anew, "as agreeable as possible to the ancient Rules." The new draught was submitted, adopted, copied in the minute book, and signed by the first five members mentioned above as being in Philadelphia. Subsequently, namely, on the 3rd of Sep. 1762, George Roberts was introduced, qualified as a member, and signed the Laws. This is the sixth and last name signed to these laws. He was subsequently dropped from the list, and then re-elected, Feb. 12, 1768. Between Oct. 22, 1762 and Apr. 25, 1766, no minutes are known to exist. At the meeting of April 25, 1766, six members, whose names occur for the first time, are noted as present: viz, Isaac Bartram, Moses Bartram, Owen Biddle, James Pearson, Joseph Paschall, and Isaac Zane, Jun. These members must have been elected between Oct. 22, 1762 and April 25, 1766; and hence some, if not regular, meetings must

have taken place in the interval. It is true that two of the six, viz., Isaac Bartram and James Pearson had been elected before, namely on the 9th of Feb. 1759; but, as they were never introduced and as their names do not appear either as present or absent in the minutes of any meeting up to Oct. 22, 1762, it is probable that this election was not recognized.

At the meeting of May 23rd, 1766, Owen Biddle and Isaac Paschall, previously appointed for the purpose but not since the 25th of Apr. 1766, the date of the resumption of the minutes, submitted a revised draught of the laws which, at the next meeting (May 30), was adopted with a blank left for the name, and ordered to be copied in the Book. The copy of these laws is to be found just preceding the minutes of April 25, 1766. They are signed first by Charles Thomson, Isaac Paschall, and Edmund Physick,—the other three members, William Hopkins, Joshua Howell, and George Roberts, who had signed the previous copy of the Laws being dropped. After these three names follow the six signatures of the members, mentioned above as introduced between Oct. 1762 and Apr. 1766. Subsequently to this period, the minutes indicate who were elected and introduced; and the book shows that twenty-one additional members signed the laws, in all thirty names. These twenty-one members were Nicholas Waln, Benjamin Davis, William Bettle, Clement Biddle, Samuel Eldridge, John Lukens, John Morgan, Cadwalader

Evans, Thomas Mifflin, David Evans, Samuel Powel, John Morris, Jr., George Roberts, Jonathan Odell, James Alexander, Richard Wells, Oswell Eve, Lewis Nicola, William White, Thomas Fisher, and John Foxcroft.

We shall proceed to make further extracts from the minutes.

1766. *Sep. 12th.* "The Company met, proceeded to consider the expediency of admitting more members into our Society."

19th. The following were chosen members, viz. Stephen Woolley, William Bettle, Samuel Eldridge, Benjamin Davis, Merchant, and Nicholas Waln.

Oct. 3rd. Benjamin Davis and Nicholas Waln admitted, and John Lukens and Clement Biddle duly chosen.

Oct. 10th. "William Bettle, Clement Biddle, and Samuel Eldridge were this evening introduced and regularly qualified agreeable to the sixth rule."

Oct. 17th. John Lukens introduced and duly qualified.

Nov. 21st. Isaac Zane excluded, for absence for three successive nights, without sending a sufficient apology.

Nov. 28th. "Isaac Bartram proposes to take into consideration whether the admitting of foreign members may not be of advantage, and promote the design of the institution, under proper regulations?"

Dec. 5th. "Isaac Bartram's scheme of admitting

foreign members was unanimously approved by the Company, and Owen Biddle, was appointed with him, to draw up a set of rules for the admittance and government of such members."

John Morgan, M.D., chosen. Employed the remainder of the evening in inquiring for a proper name for this Society.

Dec. 13th. Rules for admitting corresponding members passed. These rules are curious. See Junto Minute book, Part 2, p. 29. Also the name of the Society was unanimously adopted as follows: "The American Society for promoting and propagating Useful Knowledge, held in Philadelphia." This is the same name that is inserted in a different handwriting in the copy of the Rules which were adopted May 30, 1766, and for the insertion of which a blank had evidently been left. This shows that when these Rules were adopted, the name Junto was under advisement for change, and was not replaced by another until this date. Curious experiments, demonstrating the attraction between iron and mercury, oil and water, spirit and vinegar, entered on the minutes of this meeting. The name of the author is erased, but appears to be Owen Biddle, as well as it can be made out.

Dec. 19th. John Morgan, M.D., introduced and qualified.

1767. *March 20th.* E. Kinnersley elected.

March 27th. William Henry, William Johnson,

David Rittenhouse, Mr. Mason, and Dr. Samuel Bard, elected Corres. members. Charles Thomson chosen corresponding secretary.

May 1. This being the anniversary of the Society, the members dined on the banks of the Schuylkill.

Aug. 28. Among others James Pearson and Isaac Paschall noted as absent, with this note opposite to their names "Excused their fines, on account of [their intention of declaring] their intention of marriage at meeting this day."

Sep. 18th. Charles Thomson read a sketch of a general plan of business for the company. A summary of the plan is given and is interesting.

See Part 2, p. 56. Owen Biddle proposed to prolong the time limited for the exclusion of members for non-attendance. *See Art. 13th of Rules.*

Nov. 27th. This evening spent in conversation on the present interesting state of the Colonies, and on some proposals for augmenting the Company.

Dec. 17. "At this meeting a plan was proposed to enlarge the Society."

1768. *Jan. 1.* "This evening the subject of enlarging the Society was again resumed," and Charles Thomson read his "Proposals for enlarging this Society, in order that it may the better answer the end for which it was instituted, namely, the promoting and propagating useful knowledge." Here follows this paper, comprising about nine pages of the Minute book. *See p. 61 et seq.* The "proposal" was ap-

proved, and "C. Thomson was desired to draw up some Rules for enlarging the Society, and carrying the Plan into execution."

Jan. 19th. Doctor Adam Kuhn, John Dickinson, George Bryan, Dr. Cadwalader Evans, Thomas Pryor, David Evans, and Thomas Mifflin elected. An invitation sent to Samuel Powel to come and take his place, as being a member of the Society before he went to England.

Jan. 22nd. Ordered "that the proposals for enlarging the Society etc. be revised and corrected for publication "in a neat quarto edition."

Jan. 26th. Voted unanimously that a union with the American Philosophical Society on an equal footing, and on terms equally honorable to both, was desirable. *Part 2, p. 74.*

Jan. 29th. An informal conference took place between the members of the two Societies. The American Society passed a Resolution, proposing a union with the American Philosophical Society.

Feb. 2nd. About 9 o'clock Dr. Thomas Bond, the Rev. Dr. Smith, and Samuel Rhoads came from the Philosophical Society to inform the American Society that the former Society had elected all the members of the American Society into theirs. A minute of this election was requested, to be considered at the the next meeting.

"The members of the American Philosophical Society were proposed to be ballotted for into this Society."

Feb. 5th. The Society declines the general vote of election of its members into the Philosophical Society, because the terms of union implied in that election are not equally honorable to both Societies. "As the gentlemen of the American Philosophical Society have conducted themselves politely towards this Society," it was agreed to draw up an answer to their proceedings. Dr. Morgan, Dr. Evans, Mr. Mifflin, and Mr. Owen Biddle were appointed a Committee for this purpose.

8th. Answer to the American Philosophical Society submitted, adopted, and entered on the Minutes. It states that "we have existed for some years as a Society for the promotion of natural knowledge, and made some progress therein, useful at least to ourselves, and kept minutes of our proceedings." The answer does not recognize the American Philosophical Society, as a continuation of that begun in 1743; because it has not met for 15 or 20 years past, has not chosen officers, and is not, as we have good cause to believe, possessed of the books, papers, etc. of the former Society. That, therefore, the American Philosophical Society could not claim that appellation till sometime in last month, [Jan. 1768], "and, therefore, is junior compared with the American Society." [This shows that the American Society considered the American Philosophical Society a junior, because it virtually began in Jan. 1768. Qr? if the American Society were conscious that they dated from 1728,

would they not say that the American Philosophical Society is junior, even conceding that the latter Society dates from 1743?]

Feb. 9th. Some members apprehending that the answer agreed on at the last meeting, "if delivered might give offence," held this meeting to reconsider it. The following was substituted and ordered to be delivered by the Secretary to a member of the American Philosophical Society.

"The Minute of the American Philosophical Society of the 2nd instant, which declares our election into that Society being considered, it was unanimously determined that, as it was not on the terms proposed, we are under the necessity of declining the union."

12th. The minutes of this meeting contain the correspondence with the American Philosophical Society in extenso; having been ordered to be copied "into the book, as of this evening."

A motion was adopted that C. Thomson, Isaac Paschall, Dr. Morgan, and Dr. Evans "be appointed to draw up a short plain history of the origin of this Society, and of what has passed between this and the American Philosophical Society, and lay it before the Company at some future meeting." [This "history" does not appear to have been ever drawn up.]

"His Excell. William Franklin, Esq. being the only member of the ancient Society, who has not signed the rules in this book, Dr. Evans is desired to inform

him, that, agreeable to what was concluded on in reviving the Society, if he chooses to sign our rules and give us a meeting, he shall be considered as a regular member." *See Part 1. p. 82, and p. 102 of this Abstract,* for the explanation of "what was concluded on, in reviving the Society."

George Roberts elected.

John Morris elected.

C. Thomson, Dr. Morgan, and O. Biddle, appointed to revise and correct the "Proposals," entered on the Minutes of Jan. 1, 1768, and prepare them for the press.

Here follows the correspondence with the American Philosophical Society, already alluded to; viz.

Dr. Thomas Bond's letter to Dr. Morgan, dated Jan. 28, 1768, in answer to the first overture of union, made by the American Society, in conformity to their minute of the 26th of Jan. 1768.

Dr. Thomas Bond and the Rev. Dr. William Smith's letter, dated Feb. 5, 1768, giving a copy of the minute of the American Philosophical Society of Feb. 2, 1768, electing all the members of the American Society into the Philosophical Society.

Feb. 19th. John Morris introduced.

Dr. Evans reported an Extract from a letter from Gov. Franklin as follows:— "When I come to town, I shall do myself the pleasure of meeting you as an old member and, if I like your new Rules as I probably shall, will sign them, and make it my business to attend as often as I possibly can."

Benjamin Franklin elected.

John Bartram elected.

William Bartram and Dr. John Chapman elected corresponding members.

Feb. 22nd. First meeting noted as assembling in the "Union Library Room."

George Roberts introduced and qualified.

The "Proposals" read, and ordered to be immediately published in the Pennsylvania Chronicle, and other papers, "and that five copies be printed in a neat quarto edition."

26th. Isaac Jamineau, Rev. Jon^{n}. Odell, Richard Wells, Dr. Hugh Mercer, and Samuel Elliot of Boston, elected corresponding members;—Benjamin Rush and Oswell Eve, members.

Dr. Bard accepts his election of Mar. 27, 1767, in a letter from New York.

Mar. 4th. Rev. Mr. Jon^{n}. Odell, happening to be in town, was introduced, qualified, and presented with a certificate. James Alexander elected.

11th. James Alexander, introduced, qualified, and signed the rules.

"C. Thomson, the Corres. Sec. informed the Company, that, at his instance and request, S. Powel, Esq., and Dr. J. Morgan had suffered their names to go with his at the end of the Proposals, as persons to whom letters should be directed."

18th. Richard Wells, introduced, qualified, and furnished with a certificate of membership.

Ordered the publication in the newspapers, signed by the Corres. Sec., of thanks for certain presents of natural objects made to the Society.

April 1st. Capt. Oswell Eve, introduced and qualified. Sam. Robinson, elected a resident member; and Gov. Hopkins, Jos. Harrison, Peter Harrison, Dr. Bensell, John Sellers, John P. Simitiere, Andrew Oliver, Jonathan Belcher, John Kidel, and Jeremiah Dixon, Corresponding members.

8th. Abel James, Rev. Jacob Duché, Dr. Charles Moore, John Foxcroft, Francis Hopkinson, Michael Hillegas, Stephen Watts, George Morgan, Thomas Fisher, Lewis Nicola, and William White, elected resident members; and Edward Antill, Peter Miller, Humphrey Marshall, Benjamin Jacobs, James Webb, Frederick Post, John Okely, and James Wright, Corresponding members.

15th. Lewis Nicola, and William White were qualified, and subscribed the Rules.

C. Thomson and Dr. Morgan are appointed to agree with the printer for 200 copies of Moses Bartram's paper on silk worms.

Sir Geo. Saville, Mr. Famitz, Thomas Warner, Sir Alex. Dick, Martin Butt, Sidney George, Dr. Alex. Garden, Rev. Samuel Stillman, Dr. Warner, Sam. Warner, Dr. William Cullen, Paul Bedford, John F. Oberlin, Dr. Lionel Chalmers, elected Corresponding Members.

22nd. Thomas Fish qualified. R. Izard, Rev. Mr.

Elliot of Boston, and David Jamison, elected Corresponding Members.

The Corresponding Secretary is desired to provide a blank book for recording useful projects, inventions, discoveries, etc. made by or communicated to the Society.

29th. J. Foxcroft introduced. Stephen Paschall elected a member, and John Gill, of Kinsale, Ire., a Corresponding Member.

May 13th. A rough draught of Rules for the Society, read, considered, and deferred. Messrs. Thomas Warner, Ashton Warner, and Samuel Warner, of Antigua, returned thanks for Corresponding Membership.

June 3rd. John Smith, Charles Reed, and Dr. John Paschall elected Corresponding Members.

June 10th. Messrs. Robert Smith and Benjamin Loxley, proposed at last meeting, being members of the American Philosophical Society, were not elected. Benj. West, elected a Corresponding Member; and Samuel Miles, a resident member.

21st. Benjamin Jacobs accepts Corresponding Membership.

July 1st. Dr. John Tweedy and Rowland Evans elected Corresponding Members.

15th. Stephen Paschall introduced and qualified. Wm. White produced a fair copy of the Rules, which were read and considered, and the determination deferred to another meeting.

Aug. 13th. John P. Simitiere (Corresponding Member) introduced. Thomas Coomb, Sen. elected a resident member, and Dr. Benj. Gale and Pool, Corresponding Members.

Sept. 23rd. Jos. Bringhurst elected. At this meeting the laws, revised once more, are ratified, and, in their new form, copied on the minutes. The Society now took the name of "*The American Society, held at Philadelphia for promoting Useful Knowledge.*"

[The Rules are much changed. The four qualifications are dispensed with, and an "Obligation" is substituted, which must be signed by the member on his introduction. The members are divided into Fellows, and Corresponding Members, and the officers changed to a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary, three Curators, and a Treasurer, to be elected annually at the last meeting in April. The anniversary is continued (the first of May) on which to dine or sup together, "the better to preserve that friendship which is proposed by the members."]

Oct. 7th. "C. Thomson is desired to get a book with the Obligation copied therein, where the members may sign."

14th. "The Medical Society, subsisting in this place," proposed to be incorporated with this Society.

Jos. Bringhurst elected a fellow, and Arbo, Wm. Scull, Joseph Hutchins, Himili, and Day, Corresponding Members.

Oct. 21st. Thomas Foxcroft elected a fellow.

28th. Agreed that the "Officers be chosen next Friday, and that written notices be sent to each Fellow."

"Charles Thomson is desired to bring with him the copy of the Laws which he has made, and the Obligation transcribed in a book for the Fellows to sign."

John Benezet elected a Fellow.

Nov. 4th. The Society elected Benjamin Franklin President; Samuel Powel, Vice-President; Charles Thomson and Thomas Mifflin, Secretaries; Dr. Morgan, Lewis Nicola, and Isaac Bartram, Curators; and Clement Biddle, Treasurer. "Charles Thomson, having brought with him a book wherein the Laws were fairly copied, the same were read."

"The Obligation being also copied in another part of the same book, the fellows present subscribed the same, and each paid the sum of ten shillings as admission money."

The Philadelphia Medical Society, instituted the 14th of February, 1765, was, by unanimous agreement, united and incorported with this Society.

Isaac Smith and John Walker, elected Corresponding Members.

Nov. 11th. Four members of the Medical Society, Sonmans, Glentworth, Bayard, and Clarkson, signed the Obligation. John Benezet also signed. Lambert Cadwalader chosen a Fellow.

18th. Samuel Miles subscribed the Obligation. The Corresponding Secretary informed the meeting that

the American Philosophical Society, desirous of a union, had, at their last meeting, appointed a Committee, composed of their two Vice-Presidents, two Secretaries, and Messrs. Rhoads and Syng, to confer with a Committee of this Society, and consider of the terms of union. The American Society, appointed as their Committee, S. Powel, Vice-President, Charles Thomson, and Thomas Mifflin, Secretaries, Messrs. J. Morgan and L. Nicola, two of the Curators, and Mr. Isaac Paschall.

The Society next instructed their Committee under five heads, relating to the name, Laws, first place of meeting, etc. of the United Society. Nothing to be concluded on by the Committee but everything to be laid before the Society for their sanction.

John Cadwalader and John Murgatroyd chosen fellows. James Wilson, William Hewson, and Edward Biddle, chosen Corresponding members.

Nov. 25th. Jacob Duché and Edward Penington elected Fellows; and Capt. Gardner and Dr. Mien, Corresponding Members.

Dec. 2nd. The Committee of Conference reported the minutes of a meeting had with the Committee of the American Philosophical Society, which minutes are copied on the Society Minutes. The Society proceeded to consider and amend the conference minutes.

They agree to unite on terms of perfect equality under the name of "The American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia for promoting Useful

Knowledge;" being a name, comprehending as near as possible, the designation of the original Societies; to meet at an indifferent place, not previously used by either Society; to elect officers at the first meeting; and to digest the Laws of both Societies into one Code after the union. They also proposed to have a new Minute book for the United Society, with a certain preamble, followed by seven articles of union. See part 2, p. 143, for the preamble and articles.

Henry Drinker, Matthew Clarkson, Joseph Stiles, Joseph Galloway, Thomas Levezly, and Samuel Wharton, elected fellows.

9th. The Committee of Conference reported nine articles as agreed upon by both Committees, as the terms of the union. Here the officers are settled to be, one patron, one president, three vice-presidents, one treasurer, four secretaries, and three curators; all, except the patron, to be elected at the first meeting in Jan. next. The Governor of the Province to be waited on by a Committee of the United Society, to request him to be the patron.

Dec. 16th. This evening, Dr. Cadwalader, Dr. Redman, Jacob Duché, Rev. Mr. Duché, Mr. Penington, Mr. Hopkinson, Mr. Lambert Cadwalader, and Mr. Murgatroyd, signed the Obligation, agreeably to the Rules.

Dec. 20th. Benjamin Wynkoop, John Drinker, Thomas Gilpin, Thomas Clifford, Levi Hollingsworth, James Worrell, and Isaac Wharton, elected fellows.

Some explanations of the Articles of Union of the joint Committee asked for, and amplifications made, by the American Philosophical Society, to prevent any misunderstanding. The latter agreed to by the American Society unanimously. The Societies then exchanged their lists of members.

On the minutes of the American Society are inserted at length, their list of members, as well as the list of the American Philosophical Society, furnished to them by the latter.

The Committee of the American Society reported that the Philosophical Society had voted the union on the terms reported by the joint Committee, and as explained this evening. Whereupon, the American Society resolved unanimously to unite with the Philosophical Society on these terms.

Dec. 30th. The treasurer presented his account, from which it appeared that there was not money in his hands sufficient to defray the debts of the Society; whereupon a Committee was appointed to settle finally with the Treasurer; and in case the outstanding admission money is not sufficient to pay the debts of the Society, the Committee, with the Treasurer, was empowered to lay an assessment on the Fellows to discharge them.

The members were desired to meet at the College on the succeeding Monday (Jan. 2, 1769) to elect officers of the United Society.

APPENDIX C.

Chronological Statement.

1727. *Autumn.* Formed the Junto. Met on Friday evenings. Every member in turn to produce one or more queries on any point of Morals, Politics, or Natural Philosophy, to be discussed, and once in three months on any subject he pleased. Our debates were to be under the direction of a president, and to be conducted in the sincere spirit of inquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute or desire of victory.

The first members besides Franklin, were Joseph Breintnal, Thomas Godfrey, ("He soon left us") Nicholas Scull, William Parsons, William Mangridge, Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, George Webb, Robert Grace, and William Coleman. My friendship for William Coleman "continued without interruption to his death, upwards of forty years; and the club continued almost as long, and was the best school of philosophy, morality, and politics that then existed in the province." *Franklin's Autobiography. 1 Sparks, 81 et seq. Written by Franklin in 1771. 1 Sparks 1. Note.*

List of members given by Roberts Vaux, derived from the papers of his grandfather, Hugh Roberts:— "B. Franklin, Hugh Roberts, William Coleman, Philip Syng, Enoch Flower, Joseph Wharton, William Griffiths, Luke Morris, Joseph Turner, Joseph Ship-

pen, Joseph Trotter, Samuel Jervis, Samuel Rhoads, Joseph Brientnall." *Hazard's Register, XV, 183.*

1728. "Rules for a Club established for mutual Improvement." These rules were drawn up in 1728. "Our debates were to be under the direction of a president," etc. *2 Sparks 9.* Twenty-four queries to be read over by each member on the morning of each meeting. *Ibid.*

1729. Discussion in Junto about paper money. *1 Sparks, 90.*

1730. *About Sep. 1.* Junto met, not at a tavern, but at a little room of Mr. Grace's, and they clubbed their books. By help of friends of the Junto, got fifty subscribers to a subscription library. *1 Sparks 96, 97.*

1731. Left the ale house where they first met, and hired a room to hold their Club in. *1 Sparks, 99.*

1732. *June 30.* "That all new members be qualified by the four qualifications, and all the old ones take." *2 Sparks 551 et seq.*

1733. "I ever forbid myself, agreeably to the old laws of our Junto, the use of every word and expression in the language that imparted a fixed opinion." *1 Sparks, 116.*

1735. Published pieces in his newspaper which he had read before the Junto. (Socratic Dialogue—Vicious man not a man of sense). *1 Sparks, 123.*

1736. Junto useful, and some members wished to introduce their friends, and increase the number of

members above twelve, the original number. Instead of this Franklin proposed that each member should form a subordinate Club, with the same rules, concealing the existence of the original Club. Five or six were formed. The *Vine,* the *Union,* the *Band. 1 Sparks, 129.*

1737. Wrote a paper, to be read at the Junto, about the irregularities of the Watch, and proposing the hiring of proper men. Approved of by the Junto, and communicated to the other Clubs, as if originating with them. This led to a law being passed, carrying out the plan. *1 Sparks, 132–33.*

Read to Junto, a paper about fires, which led to the establishment of the first fire company. *1 Sparks, 133.*

1743. *May 14.* "A proposal for promoting useful knowledge among the British Plantations in America." This proposal, printed as a circular letter, dated Philadelphia, contains this paragraph. "That one Society be formed of Virtuosi or ingenious men, residing in the several colonies, to be called *"The American Philosophical Society,* who are to maintain a constant correspondence." *6 Sparks 14–15.*

Nov. 4. My long absence from home put my business so far behindhand that I had no leisure to forward the scheme of the Society. *Franklin to C. Colden, 6 Sparks, 25.*

1744. *March 27.* John Bartram to Colden, referring to the A. P. S. *6 Sparks, 14 (note).*

April 5. Franklin to Colden about the A. P. S., giving a list of members, and division of sciences among them. *6 Sparks, 28.*

Proposed and established a Philosophical Society. *1 Sparks, 144.*

1749. Associated in the design of an academy, a number of active friends, of whom the Junto furnished a good part. *1 Sparks, 158.*

1750. Beginning of the Society-Junto in this year, as per following extract from C. Thomson's Ms. letter to Franklin, dated Nov. 6, 1768.

"You remember the Society to which I belonged, which was begun in the year 1750. By the death and removal of some of its members, it dwindled for some time to that degree, that I was apprehensive of its dissolution." *Mr. Fisher's paper, p. 153.*

1753. *July 16.* ". . . My respects to Mrs. Roberts and to all our old friends of the Junto, Hospital, and Insurance." *Franklin to Hugh Roberts. 7 Sparks, 77. (Note)*

1757. *July 27.* Franklin and his son William Franklin arrive in London. *1 Sparks, 226.*

December 18. Room and necessaries appear to be paid for by the Society-Junto from this date to Sam. Carruthers, as per receipt. *See front page of Junto Minute book.*

1758. *February 13.* Fines due in Society-Junto from this date. *See Minutes Nov. 3, 1758.*

September 16. "Two of the former members of the

Junto you tell me are departed this life, Potts and Parsons." . . . "I do not quite like your absenting yourself from the good old Club, the Junto." *Franklin to Hugh Roberts. 7 Sparks, 181.*

September 22. Date of the first Society-Junto Minutes extant.

1759. I. Paschall proposes "How may the possession of the Lakes be best improved to the advantage of the English?" *See Minutes under this date.*

1760. Philip Syng, Jun. was buried in Christ Church burial ground, Nov. 14, 1760. *Certif. of Robt. R. Bringhurst, Clerk.*

1761. *February 26.* "You tell me you sometimes visit the ancient Junto. I wish you would do it oftener. I know they all love and respect you, and regret your absenting yourself so much. People are apt to grow strange and not understand one another so well, when they meet but seldom. Since we have held that Club till we are grown grey together, let us hold it out to the End. For my own Part, I find I love Company, Chat, a glass, and even a song, as well as ever; and at the same Time relish better than I us'd to do, the grave observations and wise sentences of old men's Conversation; So that I am sure the Junto will be still as agreeable to me as it ever has been: I therefore hope it will not be discontinu'd as long as we are able to crawl together." *Franklin to H. Roberts. 7 Sparks, 223.* [Original in the possession of Charles Morton Smith, Esq.]

July 30. A narrative in Society-Junto minute book, explaining a revival. Rules copied. "1. That this Society, called the Junto, meet every Friday evening" etc. Four qualifications given. Substantially the same as those of the Franklin-Junto. *Junto Minutes, Part 1. pp. 81, 83, 84.*

1761. *Oct. 16, to Sep. 3, 1762.* For this interval of nearly eleven months, no minutes known to exist of the Society-Junto. For this period it is probable that no meetings took place. *See further on, date, Sept. 10, 1762.*

1762. *End of August.* Franklin sailed from England with his son, and arrived in Philadelphia on the 1st of Nov., after an absence of more than five years. A few days before he sailed, his son was appointed Governor of New Jersey. *1 Sparks, 268, 269.*

Sep. 3. "The members of the Junto, desirous of continuing the Society, met this evening, having again agreed with Mr. Carruthers for the room on the same terms, on which they had it formerly," etc. *See Junto Minutes of this date.*

Sept. 10. E. Physick excuses himself for not having introduced Ch. Moore, a member elect, because he went on a journey, "soon after which the Society was discontinued. Now we are met again" etc. C. Moore was elected Oct. 2, 1761. Only two meetings are recorded afterwards in the minute book, after which a hiatus exists until Sep. 3, 1762. *See Junto Minutes under date of Sep. 10, 1762.*

Oct. 22, to Apr. 25, 1766. For this interval, embracing 3½ years, no minutes are known to exist; but six members were elected in the interval, whose names first appear as present on the minutes of Apr. 25, 1766. Between Sep. 3 and Oct. 22, 1762, both dates inclusive, there were six meetings and two attempts at meetings. With the exception of these, no meetings are recorded from Oct. 16, 1761, to April 25, 1766, a period of 4½ years.

1762. *November 1.* Franklin arrived in Philadelphia.

1764. *November 7.* Franklin left Philadelphia on his second mission to England. *1 Sparks, 287.* Arrived Dec. 9. *7 Sparks, 281.* He was consequently back two years.

1765. *May 20.* "I sometimes visit the worthy remains of the ancient Junto, for whom I have a high esteem, but alas the political, polemical divisions have in some measure contributed to lessen that harmony we there formerly enjoyed." *Hugh Roberts to Franklin. Franklin papers, in the possession of the Society.*

July 7. "I wish you would continue to meet the Junto, notwithstanding that some effects of our public political misunderstandings may sometimes appear there. It is now perhaps one of the *oldest* clubs, as I think it was formerly one of the *best,* in the King's dominions. It wants but about two years of forty since it was established. We loved and still love one

another; we are grown gray together, and yet it is too early to part. Let us sit till the evening of life is spent. The last hours are always the most joyous. When we can stay no longer, it is time enough then to bid each other good night, separate, and go quietly to bed." *7 Sparks, 300.*

1766. *Feb. 27.* "Remember me affectionately to the Junto." *Franklin to H. Roberts, 7 Sparks, 308.*

March 1. "The Junto fainted last summer in the hot weather, and has not yet revived; your presence might reanimate it without which I apprehend it will never recover." *P. Syng to Franklin. Franklin's papers in the possession of the Society.*

April 25. This is the date of the first meeting recorded, after the long chasm in the minutes. The minutes of this date are preceded by a new draught of the Laws, which were adopted, (except the name "Junto," which was under advisement for alteration) on the 30th of May 1766. The new name "*The American Society for promoting and propagating Useful Knowledge, held in Philadelphia,*" was not adopted until the 13th of December following. The new draught of the Laws was evidently at first written out with a blank, to receive the new name when decided on, which will be found inserted in a different hand-writing in the draught.

1768. *January 1.* C. Thomson read his Proposal for enlarging the Society, about nine pages in the minute book. In the proposal is this sentence:— "By some

happy genius magnetism may be reduced to certain laws, in the same manner as electricity now is by the unwearied diligence and sagacity of the ingenious Doctor Franklin."

February 8. "We have existed for some years as a Society for the promotion of natural knowledge" etc. Extract from the answer of the American Society to the American Philosophical Society, in relation to a union. *Junto Minute book, Part 2, p. 79.* This answer was never sent. *See p. 81.*

February 12. "His Excellency William Franklin, Esq., being now the only member of the ancient Society who has not signed the rules in this book" etc. *Junto Minute Book, Part 2, p. 82.*

February 19. Franklin elected a member of the American Society. *p. 87.*

November 4. Franklin Elected President of the American Society. *p. 132.*

November 6. Date of C. Thomson's letter to Franklin, stating that the American Society was begun in 1750, and informing him of his election as President of it.

1769. *January 11th.* William Coleman died. *Extract from the family register, furnished by Coleman Fisher, Esq.*

June 7th. "I long Meditated a Revival of our American Philosophical Society, and at length I thought I saw my way clear in doing it, but the old party le[a]ven split us for a Time. We are now united,

and, with your Presence, may make a Figure, but, till that happy Event, I fear much will not be done." *Dr. Thomas Bond to Franklin. 1 Sparks, 578.* [Also Franklin Papers in A.P.S. II. 179.]

1773. *January 22.* "Nor can we entertain a doubt of the like encouragement on all necessary occasions, when we have the happiness to behold the first person in the administration of this government now sitting as our patron."* *Extract from the Rev. Dr. Wm. Smith's Oration before the A. P. S. delivered on the above date, page 11.*

1775. *May 5.* Franklin arrived in Philadelphia after his second mission to England. Absent more than 10 years. *1 Sparks, 391.*

1776. *October 26.* Sailed for France, and arrived in 30 days in Quiberon Bay. *1 Sparks, 417.*

1782. *May 21.* "And gradually established many necessary institutions, among which was this Philosophical Society, so early as in '43, when the plan was formed and published, the members chosen, and an invitation given to all ingenious persons to cooperate and correspond with them on the laudable occasion." *Extract from Dr. Thomas Bond's Oration before the A. P. S. delivered on the above date, page 2.*

1785. *June 24.* "Philip Syng, the only other surviving member here, of the old Junto, labours under infirmities, keeps much at home, where I can seldom go

* "The Honorable Richard Penn, Esq., Governor of the Province."

to visit him." *H. Roberts to Franklin. Hazard's Register, XV, 184.*

September 14. Franklin arrived in Philadelphia, after an absence in France of nearly nine years. *1 Sparks, 591.*

1791. *March 1.* The Franklin Junto, "after having subsisted forty years, . . . became at last the foundation of the *American Philosophical Society,* now assembled to pay the debt of gratitude to his memory. A book containing many of the questions, discussed by the *Junto,* was, on the formation of the *American Philosophical Society,* delivered into my hands, for the purpose of being digested, and in due time published among the transactions of that body." *Rev. Dr. William Smith's Eulogium on Franklin, delivered on the above date, page 13.*

[The foregoing Report was received by the Society and its consideration deferred to the Stated Meeting of November 5th 1841, when the resolution appended to the Report was adopted

Mr. Du Ponceau stated that it was his wish to revise his Paper on the early history of the Society, and to withdraw it for that purpose.

Dr. Isaac Hays offered the following resolution:—

Resolved, That Mr. Du Ponceau be permitted to withdraw his papers from the Archives of the Society for the purpose of revision. Adopted.

From the Minutes].

ADDITIONAL DATA COLLECTED IN 1910.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO CADWALLADER COLDEN.

PHILADELPHIA, August 15, 1745.

. . . "The members of our Society here are very idle gentlemen. They will take no pains. I must, I believe, alter the scheme and proceed with the papers I have, and may receive, in the manner you advise in one of your former letters." . . .—Smyth's Franklin, II., 289.

CHARLES THOMSON TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

1757 [?]

. . . "Our Society goes on well. We have agreed to purchase an electrical apparatus, and a Martin's optical apparatus. I believe we shall trouble you to assisting in choosing the latter for us. But of this more hereafter." . . .—Franklin Papers in A.P.S., XLVIII., 120.

HUGH ROBERTS TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

PHILADELPHIA, May 15, 1760.

"Pursuant to thy order, I have 2 or 3 times revisited the ancient Junto (gentlemen for whom I have a great esteem) and I found some relaxation from the anxiety which attends business, yet I cannot say that the variety of trivial chat (to which I am also inclined) affords satisfaction when under restraint, so that in some respects there must be an union of

thought and affection to make company altogether agreeable, and the Hours glide with ease and pleasure."

Draft of letter in the possession of Charles Morton Smith, Esq.

HUGH ROBERTS TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

PHILADELPHIA, October 12, 1765.

. . . "The remaining members of the good old Junto adjourned during the warm and short evenings and are now endeavoring to find a House for their and thy reception where we may sit with more satisfaction than of late."

Draft of letter in possession of Charles Morton Smith, Esq.

CADWALADER EVANS TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

PHILADELPHIA, January 25, 1768.

. . . "Dr. Bond, then, strenuously endeavored to revive the old Society, begun by your Father 25 years ago & to w^{ch} he had offered to be Secretary [he broached the scheme to several and a plan was fixed and they held a meeting] at Byrnes's to elect a President, Vice-President, Secretary &c. I was told your Father was to be President and Smith or Ewing Secretary. Whether they chose the officers that Night or not, I cannot say, but they Ballotted in Gov^{r}. Penn & between 20 & 30 others as you will see by the proposals accompanying this. . . . You may have heard that some Members of the young Junto, together with

others associated, have met every Friday night for two or three years past, to improve themselves in natural knowledge, and make collections of the different kinds of fossils. . . . This young Junto ever since last September had been fabricating a plan from that of the Royal Society and the Society for Arts, Commerce &c and proposed taking in a considerable number of ingenious & publick spirited Gentlemen to aid and forward their design. . . . Several of our friends are disposed to favor it and with myself are ballotted in; but Ed: Physick, a proprietary officer, and some others of the Company are rather for a Junction and puzzle their schemes. The affair stands thus, and I have been warmly solicited to state it to you, to suspend, at least, your joining Gov^r^ Penn, Smith &c. I told them I thought there was not much danger and promised to do it because it is said you are to be chosen by them. Ch. Thomson is extremely zealous for supporting their institution." . . .

Franklin Papers, A. P. S., Vol. 58, Folio 2.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN TO CADWALADER EVANS.

JANUARY 29, 1768.

" I am much obliged to you for your Account of the two new Philosophical Societies; but the printed proposals to which you refer me, were not sent, owing I suppose to your Hurry. I am at a Loss to know with what Propriety they can talk of reviving the old Society began by my Father; for they are not I believe in

possession of any of the papers &c. which belong to it. I think I saw them all some years ago in my Father's possession and have no doubt but that they are so still. I question whether any of the persons who met to revive it were ever Members, except Dr. Bond and S. Rhoads; & I think before they attempted to revive it they should have summoned a Meeting of all the old Members, & consulted them on the occasion. If they refus'd to join in the Measure then the others might have endeavored to form a new Society either upon the old plan or some other. But I fancy their scheme in calling this a Revival of the old Society—is to induce my Father to countenance it, or by making use of his Name to engage his Friends & Connections. However, you may rely that the Bait won't take with me, & I am very happy to find that it has not with you."

Franklin Papers in A. P. S., Vol. 47, page 43.

CADWALADER EVANS TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

PHILADELPHIA, NOV. 27, 1769.

. . . "I have not attended the meetings of our Society for ten months past because I must have been a solemn witness to transactions inconsistent with my Judgment or perpetually engaged in party disputations; both of which were irksome to me. . . . When Dr. Bond proposed to me the plan of the last Society, with Smith and Ewing for Secretaries, I told him I could not join them, because I considered ye objects or purposes of the institution were inquiries after

things as they really are, with the uses they are capable of being applied to for general benefit, but that such real facts or truths could not possibly pass thro' such tainted conduits without contracting a tange that would so disguise them as to deceive the world and eventually do discredit to every member of the Society." . . .—Franklin Papers in A.P.S., II., Folio 201.

WILLIAM SMITH IN EULOGIUM ON BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

"For the purpose of aiding his and increasing the materials of information, one of the first societies formed by Dr. Franklin, was in the year 1728, about the 22d of his age, and was called the JUNTO. It consisted of a select number of his younger friends, who met weekly for the "Discussion of Questions in Morality, Politics and Natural Philosophy." The Number was limited to twelve members, who were bound together in all the ties of friendship, not only in mutual communication of knowledge, but in all their worldly undertakings. This Society, after having subsisted forty years, and having contributed to the formation of some very great men, besides Dr. Franklin himself, became at last the foundation of the *American Philosophical Society,* now assembled to pay the debt of gratitude to his memory. A book containing many of the questions discussed by the *Junto* was, on the formation of the *American Philosophical Society,* delivered into my hands, for the purpose of being

digested, and in due time published among transactions of that body."

Eulogium on Benjamin Franklin delivered March 1st 1791 before the American Philosophical Society, and, agreeably to their appointment, by William Smith, D.D. one of the Vice-Presidents of the said society, and Provost of the College and Academy of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: 1792, page 13.

Definition of Date of Founding.

"By *Date of Founding,* is meant the year in which the institution was established out of which the present college or university has developed. Thus the year 1780 is the date of the foundation of an academy at Washington, Pennsylvania, from which Washington and Jefferson College *grew.*"

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2d Annual Report of President and Treasurer, 1907, page 18.

ADDENDUM

COMMUNICATION OF

J. Francis Fisher, Esq.[1]

Read June 26th, 1840.

At the stated Meeting of the Society on the 19th of June, I heard for the first time that our learned and venerable President had prepared a History of our Society, or at least of its formation; and that he had been induced to undertake it at this moment by

[1] This communication should have followed that of Mr. Du Ponceau, but it had been misplaced in the Archives of the Society and was not found until after the foregoing papers had been printed. It was transmitted to the Society with the following letter:

To John K. Kane, Esqu.

Secretary of the American Philosophical Society.

Dear Sir,

I beg you to present the following sheets as soon as possible this Evening—Either to be read immediately after Mr. DuPonceau's Paper on the History of the Society, or to be referred unread to the Committee appointed on it.

Had not Mr. DuPonceau's Paper already been presented to the Society, and an adjourned meeting called to hear it read, before I knew the subject of it, I should not trouble the Society with my Communication, but have spoken or written privately to the President, giving him my authorities on which Mr Sparks relied in preparing his sketch of the Society's History published in the Appendix to the first volume of Franklin's Works.

This would have been the most proper course, but it is now too late, and I have only to hope that my venerated friend will not think it ill done by me that I place in your hands a short recapitulation of my reasons for doubting that the old Junto Club was the foundation of the American Philosophical Society, & that he will appreciate

reading in the Appendix to the first Volume of M^r^ Sparks' Collection of D^r^ Franklin's Works an account of the two Societies by the union of which our Association was formed in 1769, and finding in it several errors of sufficient Importance to correct in a formal communication to our Fellow Members.

Every paper from our excellent & learned friend must be of great interest, and I am delighted to find that he is again induced to take his pen to give us the result of his research, the collections of tradition, and his own recollections of the early history of our Society, to which his learning has added so much lustre, and which I trust will long be honoured by his name as President.

I have not seen this manuscript which is to be read at an adjourned meeting of the Society; and it may appear unnecessary for me to add any thing to a Communication which may well be supposed to contain all the facts extant upon the subject—and even

my motives in presenting them at once rather than give them the appearance of any contradiction or criticism of his account of our Early History.

As my communication embraces sketches of three Associations existing before 1769 when an union of two of them formed our present Society—and as I must necessarily run over the same ground described by our learned President, you may think it best and have my permission to omit any part of my paper in reading it to our fellow members.

With the highest Esteem
I am truly yr. friend
J. Francis Fisher.
June 26^th^ 1840.

presumptuous in me, to differ on any point from our learned President before hearing all he has to say:— But, it is precisely because I wish to avoid all collision with him, because I do not wish to appear to correct his statements or inferences that I now submit the following pages which contain my own notions as to the origin of our Society, not thinking that my view & inferences from the *same facts* ought for a moment to be considered with those of M^{r} DuPonceau, but expecting to adduce some authority new to him, which if the history of the American Philosophical Society is to be printed ought not to be disregarded.

I have however a still stronger reason for trespassing on your attention. It is to do justice to my friend M^{r} Sparks, and his very valuable publication —If there are errors in his account of our Society, *I* am answerable for them, as it is in great measure made up from extracts taken by myself from the old Minute Books. He requested me to examine them for him, send him such excerpts as I thought important, and give him my own view of the origin of our Society. I did so at large, and it is from my notes that he abridged his account of the two original Associations.

I have not a copy of my letter to him, but I will endeavour to recollect and as briefly as possible repeat the important facts in it. It is a matter of no moment to myself whether I be found right or in error—but it may be thought of some importance that

this Society should not have it's history handed down erroneously in a work of such authority.

I believe I am aware of the principal point in Mr Sparks' account which will be objected to by Mr DuPonceau having had some months ago a conversation with the latter as to the antiquity of our Society, and I shall be very brief upon all the others.

Mr. Sparks speaking of one of the original Societies, that instituted in 1743 under the name of the American Philosophical Society of which Thomas Hopkinson was first President, says "This Society had no connexion with the Junto which is often mentioned in Franklin's Autobiography, & which had been established many years before" and again "In the mean time" (after the establishment of the former) "another Society sprang up in Philadelphia which was called the Junto or Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge. The date of the origin of this Society is unknown that portion of the Records which has been preserved begins September 22, 1758" &c. &c.

The Junto was instituted in 1727. It was a Club at first entirely private, limited to twelve in number, meeting for philosophical & literary conversation and social enjoyment. It is probable they kept no regular Minutes, had no written communications, possessed no library or collections, and had few accounts but those settled weekly with the respectable

Innkeeper around whose fire side they assembled; which, if a tradition I have heard be correct, was at the Old Indian King in Market Street below Third.

The first members according to D^r^ Franklin were Joseph Breintnall, Thomas Godfrey, Nicholas Scull, William Parsons, William Mangridge, Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, George Webb, Robert Grace, and William Coleman—*ten* besides Benjamin Franklin, at later periods others were elected to supply the place of those dead or retired and, if we may rely on a list found I believe by Roberts Vaux among the papers of his Grandfather, these were the following —Hugh Roberts, Philip Syng, Enoch Flower, Joseph Wharton, William Griffitts, Luke Morris, Joseph Turner, Joseph Shippen, Joseph Trotter, Samuel Jarvis, and Samuel Rhoads making eleven more. The Club was kept up till most of these were dead, having lasted according to D^r^ Franklin *nearly forty years.*[1]

About ten years after its institution (1736) an attempt was made to enlarge the Club—Franklin was opposed to it, but suggested that each of the twelve members should form a subordinate Club of similar character to report to the Junto. This plan after partial success seems to have fallen through, but the Old Club survived.

In a Letter to Hugh Roberts from Boston dated

[1] Vide Autobiography page 82. Sparks Ed.: If it did not last quite 40 years it could not be the Society for Promoting useful Knowledge which was united to the American Philosophical Society *forty-two years* after the foundation of the Junto.

July 16. 1753. Franklin sends his "respects to all our old friends of the Junto"

In one to the same from London dated September 16. 1758, he gives the characters of Potts and Parsons two of the old members lately dead.

Writing to the same from London—Feb^{y}. 26. 1761 he says "You tell me you some times visit the ancient Junto—I wish you would do it oftener. I know they all love & respect you, & regret your absenting yourself so much * * * Since we have held that Club till we are grown gray together let us hold it out to the end" &c

Again, July 7. 1765 he writes "I wish you would continue to meet the Junto, notwithstanding some effects of our public political misunderstandings may sometimes appear there. It is now perhaps one of the oldest Clubs, as I think it was formerly one of the best in the King's dominions. It wants but about two years of being forty since it was established"—

[2]And finally Feb^{y} 27, 1766—He says "Remember me affectionately to the Junto"

This is the last mention I find of the Old Club—It is possible it subsisted a few years longer—that it may have welcomed to its meetings its Founder on his return from England, & enjoyed with him before its extinction, a few more of those agreeable evenings to

[2] The letters from which the above extracts are taken are very interesting—I had the good fortune to procure most of them for Mr Sparks.

which he so fondly refers. For the present I leave it, only hereafter referring to it to show that it did not terminate by a union with the American Philosophical Society.

I believe there is no difference of opinion as to the origin of the Society of 1743—of which Benjamin Franklin was certainly the projector as may be seen by his Proposals dated May 14, 1743.

This was to be not merely a Club like the Junto, but truly a Philosophical Society on as extensive a scale as the state of the Country would admit of, to consist only of men who had some pretention to scientific attainments, & to embrace as many as possible of such in all parts of America. Each member, as may be seen in the list given by Franklin in his letter to D^{r} Colden, selected his own department or committee. Their meetings were to be monthly, or oftener, for the sake of receiving letters & communications, witnessing experiments &c. They were to publish a Quarterly Bulletin of Proceedings, and at the end of the year collections of such experiments, discoveries and improvements as may be thought of public advantage. In fact, this is really the Model and Germ of our Society. To it we must look back as to our earliest progenitor and, when May 1843 arrives, can properly celebrate our Centennial Anniversary.

The first President of this Society was Thomas Hopkinson, Franklin being Secretary. How long it

was kept up I have not been able to discover: probably not more than four years, as I find at the time of the Treaty for a union with the Society for Promoting Useful Knowledge, among other objections made by the latter Society to be merged in the other by a simple election of all its members by the Philosophical Society, that the latter had not held any meetings for twenty years—and this was probably true.

It was however still thought to exist by its surviving members, who met in November 1767, elected a large number of new members chiefly of the friends of the Proprietaries & richest men of the Province, as well as some few from other parts of America, chose Governor James Hamilton their President, and recommenced their regular Meetings after the old plan. The letter read last Friday Evening addressed by the Rev^{d} Provost Smith, one of the Secretaries to Governor Hamilton, with the thin Minute Book in our possession shew that their attention was directed to Science and that they had already taken measures for observing the Transit of Venus.

It was, I believe, by this Society that the proposal was first made for an incorporation with the American Society for promoting Useful Knowledge. In February, 1768 they elected all its Members into the Philosophical Society, but it was not until the 2^{d} of June, 1769 that the Union was effected under the joint name we at present bear.

The American Society for promoting Useful Knowledge was instituted in 1750[3]—Its original name was the[4] *Junto* or Society for the promotion of Useful Knowledge. The earliest of it's records which we possess begin September 22d. 1758. It seems to have been an Association rather for the mutual improvement of the Members by discussing a great variety of subjects than for enlarged philosophical enquiry. It is needless to recapitulate the History of this Society through its various declines, revivals and reorganizations till its reunion with the Philosophical Society

Tho' somewhat similar in its plan and objects to the *Old Junto* and consisting in 1758 of the same number of Members (12), it could at most have been only a copy or a *Junior Society.* It consisted then of young men, the majority of whom were at least twenty years younger than Dr Franklin. The Names given are Francis Rawle, Charles Thomson, S. Wooley, P. Chevalier, I. Mather, Philip Syng, I. Paschall, Ed: Physick, William Franklin, I. Howell, W. Hopkins, P. Jackson. *That these were all,* is proved by the Minutes in our possession where at most of the meetings the *absent* are named as well

[3] This fact I have only ascertained within a few days—tho' my previous opinions had nearly fixed the year of its establishment.

[4] This name *Junto* which was dropped by the Society a few years afterwards has been the chief source of confusion & mistake as to the origin of the association.

as the present, with the cause or excuse, as "apologized," "unwell," "out of town," "absent in England" (as William Franklin was at the second Meeting).

D^r^ Franklin, then could not have been a member, as absence in England did not suspend membership, nor Hugh Roberts, nor any of the other survivors of the *Old Junto* and these were several at that time. In a letter above quoted, dated February, 1761, D^r^ Franklin speaks of Hugh Roberts' occasional attendance at the meetings of the *Old Club*—now had it been the same as this Society its Minutes, which for three previous years are regularly kept, would have mentioned his presence which *they do not* nor does the name of any of Franklin's associates of the Junto occur but that of Philip Syng, who was perhaps son of the member of the old Club of the same name.

But this is not all, D^r^ Franklin, tho' still in England, was elected into this Society the 19^th^ of February 1768, and chosen it's President the 4^th^ of November following just previous to its union with the American Philosophical Society. Into his own Club, the old Junto, he surely would not need a re-election.

So far, I had already satisfied myself, when I heard of a letter from Charles Thomson to D^r^ Franklin in the possession of William B. Reed Esq^u^ in which one of the Societies was spoken of. In it I have found unexpected and entire confirmation of my opinion.

The following is a copy.

PHILADEL[A], Nov 6, 1768.

Dear Sir,

It is with pain I recollect that the agreeable correspondence with which you were pleased to honour me has been so long broken off. Conscious of the purity of my intentions and uprightness of my conduct, I waited for the pleasure of seeing you, and rested fully satisfyed that, in whatever light I may have been represented by some who of late have taken it into their heads to be dissatisfyed with me, I should be found to have acted not unworthy the notice or friendship with which you have honoured me.

I longed for your arrival on another account, that I might have your advice and assistance in the execution of a plan which I flattered myself might be useful to our Country.

You remember the Society to which I belonged, which was begun in the year 1750. By the death and removal of some of it's members, it dwindled for some time to that degree that I was apprehensive of its dissolution.

From some conversation I had with you, some few of us exerted ourselves to revive it again. New members were elected and our meetings became more regular. As our views were enlarged with our years,[5] we became desirous of altering and enlarging the plan of our Society, and if possible, rendering it useful to the Publick. For this end the enclosed Proposals were

[5] One might infer from this the members were young men.

drawn up and laid before the Society; who approved the same and ordered them to be published, and immediately proceeded to draw up some rules for carrying the same into execution. At first, we met with some discouragements and experienced some difficulties, which by perseverance are at last in a great measure overcome; and I have now the pleasure to inform you we have brought the Society to some degree of perfection.

We have established a correspondence in most of the Colonies, on the Continent and in some of the Islands, and have formed a set of Rules or Laws for our Government which I shall transmit to you by the next opportunity.

We did ourselves the honour early (Feb'y 19, 1768) to elect you a Member and requested the favour of your Son and D^{r} Evans to inform you.

And now having resolved to elect standing Officers, we have presumed to elect you our President, and hope for your Patronage and Assistance. Mr. Samuel Powel is our Vice-President; D^{r} Morgan, Major Nicola, and J. Bartram our Curators; M^{r} Biddle our Treasurer and M^{r} Thomas Mifflin and myself Secretaries.

We are yet in an infant state, and dare not promise any great matters; however the Discoveries already made and communicated to us, some of which we have laid before the public, encourage us to hope that our undertaking will not be in vaine.

I am with the greatest esteem and affection
your sincere friend
CHARLES THOMSON.

(Endorsed) letter to Dr Franklin. Nov. 6. 1768

Here is a Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the American Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge. It is clear that Franklin was not it's Founder, that he took no part in it except by advice to his young friends who formed it, that he never attended its meetings, nor indeed was a member till the eve of its union with the American Philosophical Society.

Of this last Society he was really the Projector. I have already referred to his excellent paper of Proposals, which embraces all the objects of a Scientific association, and suggests the best plans for it's organization and proceedings. Most of his suggestions are embodied in the Constitution and By-Laws of our Society and are not to be improved on.

Altho' not the President of this Society he was certainly it's most active member and moving spirit; and the suspension of it's meetings was doubtless owing to *his* public Duties at home and long absence in England.

That he was not elected President on its revival, was probably owing to political feeling. The few surviving members who reorganized it in 1768 were of the Aristocratic or Proprietary Party, and a majority of the newly elected Members were of similar connexion. Governor Hamilton was chosen, a

sensible and well educated man but an old one who took little interest in the Society or it's objects, and there is little doubt the Society would have soon expired after a short languishing had not the great American Philosopher been soon placed at it's head, and an Union been effected with the more active and practical men of the other Society.

It would be pleasing to believe our Society the lineal Descendant of the Old Junto, the oldest literary Club in America—The favourite resort of Franklin:—It would be honourable to our History to associate his name more intimately with the first Philosophical Enquiries of our Predecessors. We must however be satisfied that *his Junto* gave the Example:—His Proposals in 1743 the first Plan: That He himself was the first head of our United Societies—the first of a series of distinguished Presidents of whose names and works our Country, as well as our City and Society, are truly proud.

J. Francis Fisher,
June 24th 1840.

In the preceding sketch there may be several trifling errors, as I have depended on Mr Sparks Account of the Society & my own recollections, but there cannot be any material mistake. I refer the Committee to the Minute Books & Spark's Collection of Franklin's Works.

J. FRANCIS FISHER TO PETER S. DUPONCEAU.

June 30, 1840

My dear Sir,

There are one or two observations which I would make on the apparent discrepancies between your Account of the American Society and the letter of Charles Thomson.

Is it not very extraordinary that he should write "You remember the Society to which *I* belonged" if Franklin had ever been a Member of it himself?

Again, he says "from some conversation I had with you, some few of us exerted ourselves to revive it again." Now, this must refer to the time Franklin was in Pennsylvania, in the interval between the two Minute Books—which deficiency you think was filled with a third record book now lost, which would have shewn the part taken by Franklin in the Society while here. But I ask would Charles Thomson have written thus to D^{r} Franklin if the latter had attended any of their meetings? Would he not have alluded to his presence and the part he took in the concerns of the Society? I certainly do infer from the letter that the only interest shewn by Franklin in it was by his advice. It seems to me, he was too elevated in Science to take part in such enquiries as occupied the American Society in its early days.

My Opinion is that the old Junto still survived but in a different form—Consisting now of perhaps only a few survivors of Franklin's personal & early

friends.—No longer so sollicitous about mutual improvement, but meeting chiefly for such social & intellectual enjoyment as suited a small number of old friends. Considering their education at an end, they had hereafter no appointed discussion, nor prepared essays, but indulged in more congenial chat, and did not dispute the chess or supper table as part of the Evening's Pastime. This is the tradition of the Roberts Family.

Now, if you suppose that ceasing to be a debating Society it had sunk into a Social Club, like the Governor's Club and several others in the Province, we can account for another Society consisting of different and younger men taking the name of the Junto, and even with the knowledge and approbation of D^r^ Franklin, who would perhaps willingly consent to the transfer of the old name to a new Association with the original objects "Mutual Improvement" &^c^

This also accounts for his always writing about our "old friends of the Junto" "the Ancient Junto" &^c^. Now the members of the American Society, Thomson, Physick, S. Powel &^c^ were not *old*—and the Junto could be more properly called "THE *Ancient*" when contrasted with a new Society of the same name, than of it's own right, if there existed no other of more recent creation. Thus, too, in one sense the old Junto could be called the origin of the American Society, as it was the model imitated by the young friends of D^r^ Franklin who may have suggested to

them the example and name of the old Society which had already been found so useful to complete the deficient Education of a circle of intelligent and ambitious tradesmen.

His set had derived all the expected advantage from it, and tho' they still met together they could hardly have the same objects but rather desired to enjoy convivially at their meetings the result of their early thrift and reading—to talk of old times and friends, or of favourite books, or the politicks of the day, but no longer to task their minds in subtle disputes or ingenious essays. And in confirmation of this view, see what Dr Franklin says "Since we have held that Club till we are grown gray together, let us hold it out to the end. For my own part, I find I love company, chat, a laugh, a glass, and even a song, as well as ever; and at the same time relish better than I used to do the grave observations and wise sentences of old men's conversation; so that I am sure the Junto will be still as agreeable to me as it ever has been. I therefore hope it will not be discontinued as long as we are able to crawl together" This is nothing like Charles Thomson's Society. One would not infer that there had been any attempt to revive the club by the election of younger and more active members. It seems many of his old associates had dropped off into the grave, that the survivors were infirm but still able to enjoy a temperately jovial evening. The chat—the laugh—the glass—the

song are not heard of in Chas. Thomson's Society except at their Annual Supper. Again Franklin speaks of it's age. Now forty years existence is not remarkable for a literary society but for a Club of friends. Hence his sollicitude to maintain it—hence his affectionate fondness for it. A mere debating Club which had passed into the hands of a younger set of men could hardly have been an object of much interest to him.

Dr. Smith might very well be in error. He came into the Province in 1755, was not a member of the American Society and had little or no social connexion with it's members. He wrote his Eulogy on Franklin in 1790—and, if he consulted the records of the Society, we have no reason to think he saw any Minutes earlier than 1758, from which he might have risen with as little certainty as we have. But Charles Thomson could not have been mistaken in 1768—himself the most active member of the American Society, he would not, I think, have failed to remind Franklin that he had been an old member—the founder of the Club, when he sollicited his countenance and patronage

I write this to you that you may answer my objections and submit your reply with my letter to the Committee. If I have any interest in the matter it is to give all the importance of Franklin's name to the American Society of which my Grandfather, Thomas Fisher, was a member; but after the examination of the Records I made at Mr. Spark's request

I came to the decided conclusion that it was not the continuation of the old Junto, and of that opinion I admit I am still.

I shall be happy if I can see reason to return to your view of the subject which was mine originally—My new impressions are confirmed by the letters to Hugh Roberts which I procured for Mr. Sparks.

Excuse my differing from you. The point is of no great importance, but when your very interesting history of the Society is printed, I wish it to be as accurate as it is elegant, and therefore I submit my views to you. If I am right, a few alterations in your Memoir will only be necessary—If I am wrong (and in submitting to your candour & that of the Committee, I shall be sure I am so, if you disagree with me) I shall only be sorry that I have occupied so much of the Society's time & yours.

Believe me with the highest respect & sincerest regard

Your ob. Serv^{t}
J. Francis Fisher

June 30. 1840

To

Peter S. DuPonceau Esq^{r} LL.D:
Pres^{t}. of the American Philosophical Society
&^{c} &^{c} &^{c}

J. Francis Fisher to the Secretaries of the American Philosophical Society.

(Read in Committee, November 13. 1840.)

To the Secretaries of the American Philosophical Society.

Gentlemen,

Before you make a report on M^r^ DuPonceau's communication & mine relative to the early History of our Society, I would wish merely to state, that in giving the year 1744 as the earliest to which it could carry back its history, and naming the Am. Phil. Soc^y^ then instituted as the eldest of its two parents, I had no other object than to give D^r^ Franklin all the honour possible as our Founder. There is little doubt that he was the Projector of that Society. Of the Society for promoting Useful Knowledge he clearly was not the founder & could hardly be considered a member as he never was present at a meeting nor seems to have been in any communication with it & was only elected first a member & then its President a short time before its union with the Am. Phil. Soc^y^ after that union was projected & probably with a view to it. It does not appear to me that he took any part in the negociations for the union & tho' elected the first President of the united Society can in no way be considered its parent unless we go back to the year 1744 & take the Society of that year as our oldest ancestress. Tho' it became dormant for more than twenty years he was still considered a member on its revival;

it was carried on after the plan probably drawn up by him, which was certainly a more enlarged one & more resembling that adopted by our Society than the form of the Soc^{y} for Prom^{s} Useful Knowledge. I lately received a letter from Mr. Sparks, which I have unfortunately mislaid or I would send it to you. The purport of it was this—He had learnt that M^{r} DuPonceau had written a History of the Society giving an account essentially at variance with the brief sketch in one of his Notes. He calls upon me to answer it—and at the same time states that after my having given him my sketch, which he abridged into that note, he examined the Minutes of the two old Societies himself, and came precisely to the same conclusion as I had done. Neither he nor myself need, I hope, disavow any wish to detract from the fame of D^{r} Franklin.

I am very glad I have anticipated the wish of my friend M^{r} Sparks without the necessity of reviewing or answering M^{r} DuPonceau's communication—of which I hope to avoid the appearance as well as the reality

With the greatest regard

I am Gent^{n}. yr. ob. Serv't

J. Francis Fisher

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

ON THE

DATE OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIETY

APPOINTED, FEBRUARY 18, 1910

READ MAY 1ST, 1914

Your committee appointed on February 18, 1910, to investigate and determine the date of the foundation of the Society has the honor to report:

In the appendix to the first volume of the Works of Franklin edited by Jared Sparks, which were published in 1840, appeared a sketch of the history of the American Philosophical Society. The material was prepared by Mr. J. Francis Fisher, who had become a member of the Society in 1833. It seems to have been the general belief up to this time that the Society was descended from Franklin's famous Junto of 1727; but the doubts expressed by Mr. Sparks and the denial implied in the facts alleged by Mr. Fisher gave rise to differences of opinion as to the exact date of its foundation. The venerable President of the Society, Mr. Du-Ponceau, who had become a member in 1791, was impelled by his position and his knowledge of the history and origins of the association, derived from conversa-

tions with many of its early members, to refute the statements and arguments advanced by Mr. Fisher against the prevailing belief. He prepared an elaborate "Historical Account" of the origin of the Society, in which he gave his reasons for his conviction "that the 'American Society' was no other than the Junto established by Franklin, which, when it was united to the 'Philosophical' Society, had only changed its name, extended its views, and increased the number of its members, without ceasing to be a continuation of the original association." (See Historical Account, p. 4.) Presented on the 19th of June, 1840, this paper was read at an adjourned meeting held a week afterward; and at the same time Mr. Fisher's communication was read in defence of the new views set forth by Mr. Sparks and himself.

These papers were referred to a special committee, which, on October 15, 1841, made an elaborate report based upon the papers in question and upon certain supplementary letters and other material. After reviewing all the available evidence, the Committee arrived at two conclusions, one theoretical and not quite final, the other practical and explicit. They found that the account given by Mr. Sparks of the origin of the Society is "substantially correct," and concluded, after reciting the admitted facts that the present Society was formed in 1769 by the union of the American Society, which was known as the Junto as early as 1750 and down to 1767, and the American Philosophical So-

ciety, which was founded in 1743,—"that the evidence before the Committee does not establish the identity of the Junto which was formed by Franklin in 1727, with that which afterwards became the American Society, *though they appear to have been the same in many marked particulars*"; and that "dating from the establishment of the elder parent-society, *our centennial anniversary should be celebrated on the 14th (25th, new style) of May 1843.*"

This report of the older committee, apart from their recommendation in regard to the centennial anniversary, was designedly inconclusive. "It must be admitted," they say, "that chasms still remain in our early annals which require to be filled up, that doubts exist upon some points and discrepancies of opinion on others." In the hope that more facts might be obtained to fill these gaps they recommended that neither Mr. DuPonceau's paper nor Mr. Fisher's be published, and that "both be deposited in the archives as valuable contributions to the early history of the Society." It is clear that the committee did not regard the year 1743 as absolutely fixed for the official date of the foundation of the Society; they simply recommended it as the terminus from which to reckon their centenary, as the date of "the establishment of the elder parent-society." There was no question in regard to that date; and, as 1827 was long passed, the approaching year 1843 seemed to the committee to be clearly indicated for the celebration. Their action, therefore, did not finally

dispose of the question whether or not the origin of the American Society is to be traced to the Junto founded by Franklin in 1727; and it is this question which your present Committee has considered. We have carefully reviewed the evidence presented to the Committee of 1840, which is now printed and accompanies this report; we have given due attention to such new evidence as could be found; and we have been guided by the same principle that was in the minds, though perhaps not quite enough in the view, of the older Committee, which has been formulated in the ruling of the Carnegie Foundation for the case of educational institutions, to wit, that "by date of founding is meant the year in which the institution was established, out of which the present college or university has developed."

The American Philosophical Society as at present constituted, was formed in 1769 by the union of the society originally of the same name, founded by Franklin in 1743, with a body known as the American Society for Promoting and Propagating Useful Knowledge, which was the new name formally adopted by the Junto in December 1766. Was this Junto, later known as the American Society, the Junto founded by Franklin in 1727, or, as the older Committee's report contends, was it a society established about 1750 in close imitation of Franklin's Junto, conceivably by sons or friends of the members of the older society, with the result that two societies under the same name of "The Junto" existed for some time side by side?

Of Franklin's Junto little is known beyond what he tells in his autobiography. It seems to have gone through the usual phases of activity, somnolence, or even suspended animation, and revival. Its membership was limited to twelve, its proceedings were secret. It still existed in 1765, when Hugh Roberts writes to Franklin, "I sometimes visit the worthy remains of the ancient Junto."

The minutes of the Junto in the Society's possession, —the organization which your present Committee believe to be Franklin's old club, but which the older Committee claimed to be of separate origin,—begin on September 22, 1758, and extend to October 22, 1762. From October 16, 1761, until September 3, 1762, there had been no meetings. On the date last named the following minute is made: "The members of the Junto desirous of continuing the Society, met this evening, having again agreed with Mr. Caruthers for the room on the same terms on which we had it formerly." Only a few more meetings were held until October 22, 1762, when three members were present and two members were noted as absent. Here ends the first volume of minutes. The next volume of minutes begins April 25, 1766, showing nine members of the Junto, three of whom were members at the supposed suspension four years before. The minutes now continue regularly until the union of the two societies.

In 1760, it is interesting to note, absence and other causes had reduced the membership to six; and on Feb-

ruary 6, 1761, there was talk of dissolution. It was finally decided, however, to return to the original plan of organization; and as the original rules could not be found, it was decided to write them anew from the recollection of the members. As set down, these rules do not differ materially from those which Franklin records of his Junto. On December 13, 1766, the name of the Junto was changed to the American Society for Promoting and Propagating Useful Knowledge Held in Philadelphia, and its membership was increased.

The gap from October 22, 1762, to April 25, 1766, seems to be in part explained by the letter of Philip Syng to Dr. Franklin under date of March 1, 1766, in which he says: "The Junto fainted last summer in the hot weather, and has not yet revived; your presence might reanimate it, without which, I apprehend, it will never recover." This statement clearly refers to the same Junto which Dr. Franklin mentions in his letter of July 7, 1765, to Hugh Roberts, in which he says: "I wish you would continue to meet the Junto, notwithstanding that some effects of our public political misunderstanding appear there. It is now perhaps one of the oldest clubs, as I think it was formerly one of the best, in the King's dominions. It wants but about two years of forty since it was established." Franklin's language here is significant, and it is carefully chosen. He speaks of "*the Junto*" and does not attempt to differentiate it, which he surely would have done had there existed at this time any other Junto in Phila-

delphia. He speaks of it as a "club." It was, as we know from its rules, a secret debating club limited to a membership of twelve, and not a society such as the American Philosophical Society, which he had founded in 1743. He probably refers to the lack of interest in the Junto as shown by its periods of somnolence and revival, by speaking of it as "one of the oldest clubs, as I think it was formerly one of the best, in the King's dominions." The "formerly" refers, doubtless, to those flourishing early years when Franklin took an active part in its proceedings. It is therefore reasonable to believe that the club fell into a state of suspended animation in the early forties, and remained so until a revival of its activities took place in 1750. It is also reasonable to believe that Franklin had dropped out of membership; and his election many years later can give no firm ground for the inference that there were two societies, each called the Junto, existing side by side in Philadelphia.

In what year Franklin dropped out of the Junto we do not know. As the membership was limited to twelve, it is easy to believe that when a member became so busy and so absorbed in important affairs as Franklin was in the latter part of the decade succeeding 1730, he would retire from the club; for the Junto was really a young men's debating club, organized for mental and material improvement, which required its members, under penalty of fine, to attend its weekly meetings at six o'clock in winter, and seven in summer, and to pre-

pare questions and papers for discussion. It was provided that any member who absented himself three successive nights without apology should be dropped. In 1734 Franklin was Grand Master of the Masons in Pennsylvania; two years later he was Clerk of the Assembly; in the next year he was postmaster at Philadelphia; so busy a man may well have outgrown the Junto. In May, 1743, he issued his proposals for the formation of the American Philosophical Society, which was a Society with plan and aims very different from those of his Junto; but so busy was he at this time, that in the November following he wrote to Cadwalader Colden: "My long absence from home put my business so far behindhand that I had no leisure to forward the scheme of the Society." At this time he was perfecting his Pennsylvania fire-place and making his experiments in electricity. In 1748 he entered the City Councils. In 1749 he became a commissioner of the Peace, and at the same time he issued his "Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania." He was chosen President of the Board of Trustees of the College which resulted from this effort. In 1750 he was elected to the Assembly of Pennsylvania, and was made a commissioner to arrange a treaty with the Indians. It would seem, then, that for a considerable number of years before this date he was much too absorbed in affairs of great importance, and far too busy in his regular round of duties, to have remained one of the twelve active members of the Junto, or, at its revival in

that year, to have reassociated himself with it, although we have ample evidence that he always maintained his interest in it.

If, then, it be remembered that the members of the early Junto, as they found themselves unable to perform their allotted shares in the proceedings of the club, retired to make way for younger and efficient members, many of the difficulties which confronted the older Committee in regard to the membership of the Junto will disappear. These retired members, however, it may be supposed, retained the privilege of attending the meetings of the club. Thus in 1760 Hugh Roberts writes to Franklin: "Pursuant to thy order, I have two or three times revisited the ancient Junto"; and in the following year Franklin writes to him: "You tell me you sometimes visit the ancient Junto." The word "visit" was evidently used advisedly, and would hardly have been used in reference to an active member attending the weekly meeting of his Society. Again in 1765, May 20, Roberts writes to Franklin "I sometimes visit the worthy remains of the Ancient Junto," which could well be the "new" Junto; and on October 12, 1765, he writes: "the remaining members of the good old Junto adjourned during the warm and short evenings, and are now endeavoring to find a House for their and thy reception, where we may sit with more satisfaction than of late." In the following year Franklin replies to Roberts and says "Remember me affectionately to the Junto," not

calling it the ancient or the new, but "the Junto," from which, too, we are justified in concluding that it was the one and only Junto to which he referred.

There is no unequivocal evidence whatever for the existence of the two Juntos as separate contemporaneous societies in Philadelphia. The seventy years which have elapsed since the report of the old Committee have witnessed a great revival of interest in our colonial history. Most of the older diaries and correspondance now extant have been carefully read and many of them have been printed. In all these diaries and letters, as well as in the newspapers of the day, your present Committee has been unable to find a single reference which can justify the hypothesis of the old Committee. The references in the correspondence of the day to the Ancient Junto or the old Junto, to the new Junto or the Young Junto, may all pass as facile expressions to differentiate the revived Junto from its preceding organization. This view is confirmed by the newly discovered fragments of letters found among some unbound, dilapidated sheets of the Franklin papers. One letter from Cadwalader Evans to William Franklin, under date of January 25, 1768, speaks of "some members of the young Junto," and says, "this young Junto ever since last September has been fabricating a plan. . . ." And another letter from William Franklin to Cadwalader Evans, under date of January 29, 1768 (p. 139), says, "I am much obliged to you for your Account of the two *new* Philosophical Societies."

These letters admit of no doubt as to the identity of the Societies referred to and clearly indicate the habit of the day of referring to the revived society as a new society. It was this habit which led Charles Thomson to write of the revived Junto as the Society "begun in the year 1750," and so puzzled the older Committee that they were fain to invent the hypothesis of the two Juntos. "You remember the Society to which I belonged, which was begun in the year 1750," so Mr. Thomson writes to Franklin November 6, 1768. "From some conversation I had with you,[1] some few of us exerted ourselves to revive it again."

A careful reading of this letter suggests that the organization of 1750, to which Thomson refers, was a revival of the Junto whose name it bore and whose laws and rules it adopted. He would hardly have written to Franklin "You *remember* the Society to which I belonged," were it not the Junto of which Franklin had been the founder, and in which he continued his interest, even though he had passed from its membership. In 1750 Thomson was but twenty-one years of age, and had just been brought to Philadelphia to teach Greek and Latin in the new Academy. Franklin was more than double his age, and therefore not likely to have been on terms of such intimate friendship with him as to have known with what societies he had allied

[1] This conversation occurred probably before the end of 1764, when Franklin returned to Europe, and when the Society was in a state of somnolence from October, 1762, to April, 1766, as is shown by the absence of minutes.

himself, had it not been that this was one in which Franklin himself took a deep interest. It need not be assumed that Thomson was guilty of tautology when he refers to the efforts in 1766 to revive the Society "begun in the year 1750," and says "some few of us exerted ourselves to revive it *again*." He was a student and teacher of languages, distinguished as a careful and precise writer; and mainly for that reason he was selected as Secretary of the Continental Congress. It was the same fidelity to the meaning of words that led him in later life to make a new translation of the Bible. He may well mean that both the efforts of 1750 and the more successful attempt of 1766 were revivals of the old Junto.

In 1767 there still existed the law for the exclusion of members for non-attendance; but in January, 1768, Thomson presented his "Proposals for enlarging this Society, in order that it may better answer the end for which it was instituted." These rules did away with the limited membership, the obligation of each member in turn to perform specific duties, the system of fines for neglect of duty and for absence, as well as the exclusion of members for continued absence without satisfactory excuse. Moreover, as Cadwalader Evans tells us, these new rules were based on the rules of the Royal Society and the Society of Arts.

After the adoption of the "Rules" resulting from Thomson's "Proposals" in January, 1768, there appears on the Minutes of February 12, 1768, this entry:

"His Excell. William Franklin, Esq. being the only member of the ancient Society,[1] who has not signed the rules of this book, Dr. Evans is desired to inform him, that, agreeable to what was concluded on in reviving the Society, if he chooses to sign our rules and give us a meeting, he shall be considered as a regular member." On February 19, Dr. Evans reported that Gov. Franklin wrote: "When I come to town, I shall do myself the pleasure of meeting you as an old member, and, if I like your new Rules, as I probably shall, will sign them, and make it my business to attend as often as I possibly can." Other minutes show how the old members were continued, or dropped out, as the case might be, in the revival of the Society. Dr. Franklin, no longer an active member of the Junto of twelve members, and now abroad, is recorded in the minutes of February 19, 1768, as having been "elected"; and on November 4 following, although still in Europe, at the first election of officers he was chosen "President," there having been no permanent officers prior to that time, each member acting in turn as Chairman and as Secretary.

As further evidence of the identity of this Society with the original Junto, it may be stated that Franklin throughout his correspondence only referred to it in the years between 1753 and 1766, the years in which the preserved minutes prove it to have been in existence, and he does not refer to it by that name after the date

[1] The Junto, limited to twelve members.

of its change of name to the "American Society." Philip Syng, writing to Franklin on March 1, 1766, says (p. 133): "The Junto fainted last summer in the hot weather, and has not yet revived; your presence might reanimate it, without which I apprehend it will never recover." But it did recover without Franklin's presence, and the recorded minutes begin again on April 25, 1766, after a lapse from October 22, 1762; the paragraph quoted can refer to no other than Franklin's Junto. This is confirmed by Hugh Roberts's letter to Benjamin Franklin of October 12, 1765 (see p. 138), found among the data collected in 1910: "The remaining members of the good old Junto adjourned during the warm and short evenings and are now endeavoring to find a House for *their and thy* reception where we may sit with more satisfaction than of late"; and he writes this, too, notwithstanding that Franklin was not formally elected to membership until 1768.

The identity of the Junto and the so-called "Society Junto" is confirmed by Dr. Franklin in his Autobiography in which, writing of the Junto and speaking of William Coleman as one of its members, he says of him,—"our friendship continued without interruption to his death, upwards of forty years; and the club continued almost as long, and was the best school of philosophy, morality, and politics that then existed in the province." The records show that William Coleman died in January, 1769, making the duration of his membership in the Junto agree with the statement of Dr.

Franklin as "upwards of forty years." In 1766 the club was converted by the new laws into a Society; and on December 13 its name was formally changed to "The American Society for Promoting and Propagating Useful Knowledge, held in Philadelphia." This was two years before the death of Coleman, so that the facts agree with Dr. Franklin's statement that the "club continued almost as long" and seem to confirm our assumption of the identity of his Junto with the club which now became the American Society. On January 2, 1769, the American Society was united, after prolonged and formal negotiations, with the American Philosophical Society.

This other "parent" society had been founded by Franklin in 1743, pursuant to a circular letter issued by him and entitled a "Proposal for promoting useful knowledge among the British Plantations in America." His proposal was "that one Society should be formed of *virtuosi* or ingenious men residing in the several colonies, to be established in the city of Philadelphia as the most central place, and to be called the American Philosophical Society." No record of the proceedings of this Society at this period are preserved, and it is probable that its activities ceased within a very few years of its origin. In August, 1745, Benjamin Franklin writes: "the members of our Society here are very idle gentlemen. They will take no pains. I must, I believe, alter the scheme." This Society, then, ceased to exist from some time in the latter forties until 1767,

when political feeling ran high, and the Proprietary Party of the Province, regarding with disfavor the existence of a learned Society in America [the American Society], made up mainly of members of the opposing Popular Party, determined to counteract its influences by reviving the American Philosophical Society of 1743 and electing into it their friends of the Proprietary Party. The minutes of the revived Society begin with January 19, 1768, and continue until the union with the American Society in 1769.

We have now reviewed the most important evidence to be gleaned from the minutes of club and society, and from correspondence of the day. It is in order to make a general summary of the case and determine where lies the real weight of all the testimony to be obtained. Either the American Society was a continuation of Franklin's Junto of 1727, or else there were two societies called the Junto, very similar in character and aim, existing side by side. For the claims of the former conclusion several considerations may be urged. First, the general drift and implication of the minutes, which were cited above, must certainly be regarded as making for the assumption that this Junto was a continuation of Franklin's club. The fact that Franklin himself was elected a member in 1768, which seems at first to contravene this assumption, is a perfectly natural matter in view of what has been heretofore stated.

Secondly, heavy stress must be laid on the tradition among the older members of our Society that its origin

was in Franklin's Junto, a tradition strongly urged and supported in the Historical Account of Mr. Du Ponceau, who had known the founders themselves, and on the definite statement, to the same effect, by Dr. William Smith.

Thirdly, it is highly unlikely that two contemporary societies should exist in the City of Philadelphia, each entitled, without any limiting terms, The Junto, and should leave no indisputable trace of their existence.

On the other side, in favor of the coexistence of two Juntos must be considered the statement of Charles Thomson in a letter written to Franklin November 6, 1768, quoted at length in Mr. Fisher's communication in reply to Mr. Du Ponceau (p. 153), and already noticed in the present report. One sentence in Mr. Thomson's letter constituted the main support of the contention for the coexistence of the two Juntos: "You remember the Society to which I belonged, which was begun in the year 1750," that is, of course, the Junto, afterwards the American Society. The older Committee oppose this testimony to the tradition and general feeling of the early members as expressed generally by Mr. Du Ponceau, and specifically in Dr. William Smith's Eulogium on Franklin in 1791, where he says that Franklin's Junto became at last the foundation of the American Society. If we regarded these two statements, Mr. Thomson's and Dr. Smith's, each for itself, and without further examination of the origin and import of each, the whole question would seem to be one

of veracity. The Committee, however, with considerable tact, conclude (p. 67) that it is a question not of veracity between the two men but of accuracy, and that Thomson was more likely to be accurate, writing in 1768, than Smith in 1791. But each of these statements must be further examined; and careful consideration may show that the two are not in conflict.

It may be remarked that neither at the time of Dr. Smith's address, nor at any time during thirty-two years of Thomson's subsequent life, did Thomson, or any other person, question the accuracy of Dr. Smith's statement about the origin of the Society. What the Committee goes on to quote from Dr. Thomas Bond (p. 68) as confirmatory of Thomson's statement, has no real bearing on the present question. Nobody disputes that Franklin founded the American Philosophical Society in 1743, on a most extensive plan, for scientific investigation and research; the American Society, dropping the character as well as the name of the Junto, was reaching out upon the same lines; and origins of the sort with which the old and new Committee have been concerned, which connected a learned society with a social club, had no part in Dr. Bond's idea.

Your present Committee would point out, however, that it was not simply a case of accuracy between the memory of Mr. Thomson in 1768 and the memory of Dr. William Smith in 1791. The "tradition" referred to by Dr. Smith was not his alone; and it becomes a

most formidable piece of evidence in our eyes so soon as we perceive that the farther we go into the past the surer and sounder this tradition is disclosed to be. It was practically unchallenged. On page 5 of Mr. Du Ponceau's "Account," the President tells how great had always been his interest in the Society and in the history of its founding. "I had frequent conversations with men who took a part in its formation, and particularly with the venerable Bishop White . . . who was a member of the 'American Society.' He loved to talk upon the subject. He informed me of many details respecting the union of the two societies which are not to be found in their records. . . . *Neither he nor anybody else at that time doubted of the 'American' Society having been a continuation of the Junto.* . . . This fact until a very late period was admitted by all."

This is not doubtful testimony; it surely confirms the "accuracy" of Dr. William Smith; and your Committee lays great stress upon its significance. It is true that Thomson's words are very explicit, and, so far as they go, would seem at first to make for the older Committee's conclusion. "You remember the Society to which I belonged" written to Franklin would seem to exclude him as its founder. "We did ouselves the honor . . . to elect you a member" seems confirmatory of such an inference; but the Society of 1768 had such different plans, scope, methods, Franklin at many times was so remote and at all times was so busy that his reelection in 1768 might be taken not only as proof of his

lapse from earlier membership, but also as a solicitation of his approval of the new plans, especially as they ran on the line of the other Society, the American Phiosophical Society, which Franklin had founded, without much success, in 1743.

It was quite fitting that Franklin should be consulted about the revival of the Junto in the sixties. Thomson writes to him "From some conversation I had with you, some few of us exerted ourselves to revive it again." This is in allusion to the new plans for the American Society; but, as has been pointed out, reviving *again* should be taken as indicating a previous revival of the Junto in 1750, which was a secret club with rules and aims very different from those of the later "American Society." There is evidence that the revival of an old Society passed sometimes in those days for the beginning of a new. On page 113 will be found an account of the dispute in 1768 when the two societies were arranging for their union; interesting is the contention of the American Society that it is senior over the American Philosophical Society, which is not recognized even as a continuation of the society actually begun in 1743. The reason offered for this assumption is the inactivity of the latter body for fifteen or twenty years. Again, there is considerable political and partisan hostility to be inferred from the minutes of these societies and the correspondence of the times. "I sometimes visit the worthy remains of the ancient Junto, for whom I have a great esteem, but alas, the

political, polemical divisions have in some measure contributed to lessen the harmony we there formerly enjoyed," writes Hugh Roberts to Franklin in 1765; and this passage has been combined by the older Committee with Thomson's letter of 1768 to prove the coexistence of two Juntos. There is no reason, however, why the "worthy remains of the ancient Junto" should not be the Junto which was so soon to be reorganized as the American Society, and which had been so changed and had undergone so many vicissitudes as to present scarcely the appearance of a continued organization.

Against the assumption of the two Juntos, on which rests the whole case of the older Committee, as far as they come to a decision, the argument from silence must be strongly emphasized. It is highly improbable, as Mr. Du Ponceau pointed out, that two Juntos should exist side by side. It is amazing to find no explicit mention of them if they did so exist. More than this. Bishop White was a member of the "American" Society; how could he fail to know, and note, the facts to which Thomson's statement is supposed to testify? How could he fail to see that these facts directly contravened his own repeated statements about the founding of his, that is, the "American," Junto by Franklin? The Minutes of the American Society to which Bishop White belonged tend to confirm his statements; and nowhere in the literature and letters of that time is there reference to the existence of two Juntos. But these two contemporary Juntos must absolutely be

assumed in order to give the basis for Mr. Fisher's contention; and the arguments of the older Committee (p. 85f) against Mr. Du Ponceau's statement of this "improbability if not impossibility" are not convincing.[1] Your Committee believe that these negative considerations of improbability, of silence, of the elastic nature of such a word as "begun" or "founded," and the positive evidence, not explicit, but cumulative and persistent, of the minutes of the Junto, afterwards the American Society, quite offset the scanty affirmative evidence, mainly that of Charles Thomson, brought out by our predecessors in their report.

There remain, then, the clear testimony of Mr. Du Ponceau, the positive declarations of Bishop White and Dr. Smith, and that generally accepted belief of the early members, to which Mr. Du Ponceau testified, but to which the older Committee, fascinated by the documents discovered and produced by Mr. Fisher, refused to give a really attentive ear. Nothing had been alleged or discovered which seems adequate to offset that testimony and that tradition. There is now no centennial celebration to be justified; the zeal, the partisan sharpness of controversy, which was controlled, it is true, by the fine courtesy of those gentlemen whom we are proud to call our predecessors, but which, nevertheless, can

[1] The old Committee does not appear to have given sufficient consideration to the fact that Franklin's letter to Hugh Roberts (p. 132f) was written by him within eight months after leaving Philadelphia, where he had been, off and on, for two years. If there had then been two Juntos it would have been impossible for him not to know it. Whatever shape the one Junto had assumed, it was regarded by Franklin as *his* Junto.

be read between the lines of their report, is now stilled; and your Committee is constrained to the opinion that 1727 was the date of the foundation of this Society; and it is so reported.

Charlemagne Tower,
Mayer Sulzberger,
Hampton L. Carson,
Francis B. Gummere,
Samuel Dickson,
W. W. Keen,
I. Minis Hays.

SEPARATE REPORT ON THE DATE OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIETY

I am in entire agreement with the main conclusion of the committee's report, that the origin of the American Philosophical Society should be carried back to the Junto founded by Franklin in 1727; but I am unable to agree with one section of the reasoning by which that result has been reached. We have had before us much material for the solution of our problem,—varying in character from vague reminiscences to contemporary written records. Much of this is so late, so doubtful, or so elusive as to be relatively valueless. On the other hand there are three documents or groups of documents which are both contemporary and definite, and on the interpretation of these, I am convinced, the decision of the question referred to us must be mainly based. These are, first, the written minutes in the Society's possession; second, a series of ten letters exchanged between Franklin on one side and Hugh Roberts and Philip Syng on the other, between 1753 and 1785; and third, a letter of the year 1768, from Charles Thomson to Benjamin Franklin.

From the first of these, the two minute books in the possession of our Society, it is evident that there existed for the twelve years from 1757 to 1769, though

with several intermissions, a society consisting of 12 members, meeting on Friday evenings, discussing matters of scientific or other serious interest, making use of a well established entrance ceremony and by-laws, and referred to from time to time in its records as the Junto.[1] The name, organization, objects, number of members, time of meeting and other practices of this society immediately suggest the Junto organized by Franklin in 1727 and described by him in his autobiography and some early papers;[2] and seem to indicate that this body is nothing more nor less than a continuation of that Society. A slight misgiving is perhaps aroused by the fact that in the minute book no one of the members of Franklin's Society is mentioned as a member or visitor, although at least five were still living through most of this period; that they speak of themselves in 1768 only as having "existed for some years,"[3] and nowhere make a claim of very early origin; and that in 1768 Benjamin Franklin himself was elected to membership.[4] Nevertheless these somewhat disconcerting facts can perhaps be explained away, and if we had no source of information except these minute books, I have little doubt they would be looked upon as fragmentary records of the club which Franklin founded in 1727.

When, however, we take up the ten letters between Franklin, Roberts, and Syng, which I have spoken of

[1] Abstract from Junto Minute book, Report, pp. 99, 101, 103–106, etc.

[2] Report, p. 126.

[3] Report, p. 115.

[4] Report, p. 118.

as the second group of evidences, we are immediately faced with the fact that the writers of these letters, during the same period of time as that covered by the minutes, use expressions about the Junto which are difficult if not impossible to conciliate with the minutes. The body which is referred to in this correspondence is repeatedly spoken of as "the ancient Junto," "the old Junto," "the good old Junto," "the good old club, the Junto." Its members are described as "the remaining members of the good old Junto," "the worthy remains of the ancient Junto," "our old friends of the Junto, Hospital and Insurance." Its members are spoken of by Franklin as having "grown gray together"; it is described in 1765 as "wanting but about two years of 40 since it was established." Roberts speaks of the "trivial chat" that went on at its meetings, and Franklin says, "I love company . . . and relish even better than I used to do the grave observations and wise sentences of old men's conversation, so that I am sure the Junto will be still agreeable to me as it ever has been. I therefore hope it will not be discontinued as long as we are able to crawl together."[5] One obtains from these letters an impression of a very different body from that described in the minutes.

The body described in the correspondence seems to be a group of elderly men, bound together by old asso-

[5] Report, pp. 129, 130, 132–3, 135, 137–8. Franklin to Roberts, July 16, 1753, Sept. 15, 1758, Feb. 16, 1761, July 7, 1765, Feb. 27, 1766.

Roberts to Franklin, May 15, 1760, May 20, 1765, Oct. 12, 1765, June 24, 1785.

Syng to Franklin, May 1, 1766.

ciations, meeting for informal talk, dropping off one by one, but the survivors still holding together, as Franklin says, "till the eve of life is spent." The body described in the minutes is a group of much younger men, three of them sons of the men who carry on the correspondence, meeting for the discussion of definite scientific questions. There is not a single case in which the same person is mentioned in the two bodies of records, until we reach, in 1768, the notice of the election of Benjamin Franklin to membership in the younger body.

At some time, perhaps in the summer of 1765, when, as one of the early members, Philip Syng, wrote somewhat later, "the Junto fainted last summer in the hot weather and has not yet revived," the old group seems to have ceased to meet.[6] Yet even twenty years later, in 1785, when but three of them were still living, they retained their old feeling of comradeship, for one of their members, Hugh Roberts, writing to another, Benjamin Franklin, concerning the third says, "Philip Syng, the only other surviving member of the old Junto, labours under infirmities, keeps much at home where I can seldom go to visit him."[7]

The younger group, on the other hand, continued to meet, although with various intermissions, until in 1768 they changed their name, enlarged their membership, and prepared themselves for the amalgamation with the Philosophical Society which took place next year.

The proof in these letters of the non-identity of the

[6] Report, p. 133.

[7] Report, pp. 135–6.

two groups of men, both of which refer to themselves as the Junto, does not it is true rise to an actual demonstration, but, added to the doubt left from a study of the minutes, it amounts, in my mind at least, to an absolute conviction. With the opposite view on this question taken in the report of the committee, I cannot therefore agree. The two groups of men have very much in common, including the use of the name Junto, but they were *two* groups of men, nevertheless.

The third piece of substantive evidence, the letter written by Charles Thomson to Franklin, November 6, 1768, not only confirms the impression of the existence of two societies, but contributes to the solution of the difficulty involved in their contemporary existence. In this letter Thomson, who had been the most active member of the Society of which we have the minutes, at least since 1758, tells Franklin of its recent revival, the extension of its membership and its new plans, and begs his advice and assistance in carrying out these plans. He tells him that he, Franklin, has within the last few months been elected to membership and still more recently to its presidency. This is all in accordance with what we already know from a study of the minutes, and discloses no new fact. Incidentally, however, he tells what the minutes do not tell us, that the Society was begun in 1750. This is a simple concrete statement and there is no reason to doubt that it means just what it says. The society of which we have the minutes was "begun in 1750."[8]

[8] Report, pp. 153–5.

But in what sense was the Society *begun* in 1750? That is the real question. In the year 1768, a committee was appointed to draw up "a short plain history of the origin of this Society,"[9] but unfortunately there is no evidence that it ever performed that duty, which would have relieved the present committee of its responsibilities. In default of such a history prepared by those who had personal knowledge of the facts, we can only solve the problem of the Society's origin by going back to the minutes and interpreting them in the light of Thomson's statement and of the Autobiography and the correspondence. What occurred would seem to have been something like this. In 1750 a club was formed in exact imitation of the old Junto, so far as concerned number of members, objects, procedure, habitual subjects of discussion, rules, organization, secrecy and every other discernible characteristic, except personnel. It is notable that Franklin's famous four qualifications for membership in his Junto, kindliness to other members of the Society, love for all mankind, devotion to search for truth, and belief in religious freedom, as impressed upon entering members, were almost word for word the same in the younger as in the older society. Moreover, whenever the by-laws are recapitulated or revised they are spoken of as the "ancient laws," or "original laws," as though they were taken over from an older body.[10] The members were, as has

[9] Report, p. 116.

[10] Report, pp. 56–7, 100, 101, 103–4.

been said, in three cases,—William Franklin, Philip Syng and George Roberts,—sons of members of the older body. In all cases that can be identified, they were much younger men than the members of the old Junto. This body, formed in 1750 in close imitation and close personal connection with the body established 23 years before, ought therefore to be looked upon as an offshoot of it, a younger branch, just such a body as those five or six "subordinate clubs" described by Franklin in his Autobiography as having been formed in 1736 with the same rules as the parent Society.

This view of the case having been once accepted, many pieces of minor evidence fall readily into place. A letter from Cadwalader Colden to Wm. Franklin, written in the same year as that of Thomson to Benjamin Franklin, speaks twice of the "young Junto," just as Franklin and Roberts speak of the "ancient Junto."[11] The word Junto, therefore, as applied to both societies, may well have been looked upon as a generic rather than a specific term. They were both Juntos, an elder and a younger. So the later general tradition, which is spoken of in the committee's report, of the connection of the American Philosophical Society with Franklin's Junto may not have discriminated between the two forms of the Junto. Even Dr. Smith's references in his address of 1791 may be explained as due to a misunderstanding of the relations of the two societies, to which we now possess the clue

[11] Report, pp. 138–9.

through Franklin's correspondence, but to which he had no access.[12]

It may in all fairness therefore be claimed that the Philosophical Society is derived from the ancient Junto, although through a younger branch. If the history of our Society is followed back from 1769, one of its lines of parentage, that of the Philosophical Society, as is well known, goes back to 1743; the other in my opinion goes back through the American Society and the younger Junto, begun in 1750, to the parent of that Society, the older Junto, established in 1727. The narrative given in the report of the committee of October 15, 1841, seems to me to be a clear and correct statement of the facts and the first, second, third, fourth, and sixth clauses of their conclusion to be fully justified. The fifth conclusion, however, the inference from these facts that 1743 should be considered as the earliest date of origin of the Society, does not seem to me to be justifiable.[13] If the "date of founding," as it has been formulated for the use of colleges by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching means "the year in which the institution was established out of which the present college or university (institution), has developed," the Junto of 1750 certainly developed out of the Junto of 1727, and the Society may claim its descent through a younger line just as fairly as by primogeniture, so that the date of origin of the Society

[12] Report, pp. 141–2.

[13] Report, pp. 53–96.

should be considered that of the formation of Franklin's Junto, in 1727.

E. P. CHEYNEY.

The question whether Franklin was in a proper sense the founder of our Society is not in doubt. He founded the American Philosophical Society of 1743. He founded the Junto of 1727. The development of a junior Junto, —if such a thing occurred,—was unquestionably due to the impetus of the older Junto; and the change of the local Junto into a Society which included corresponding members from other colonies was a mere broadening of its purpose. In the sense of the ruling of the Carnegie Foundation it is clear that when Franklin founded his original Junto, he became the founder of the American Society. He is admitted by all to be the founder of the Philosophical Society. Our Society therefore owes its origin to him on both sides.

CHARLEMAGNE TOWER,
JAMES T. MITCHELL,
MAYER SULZBERGER,
SAMUEL DICKSON,
HAMPTON L. CARSON,
E. P. CHEYNEY,
FRANCIS B. GUMMERE,
W. W. KEEN,
I. MINIS HAYS.

Acceptance of the Report

At the Stated Meeting of the Society held May 1, 1914, Hon. Charlemagne Tower, Chairman, presented and read at length the report of the Committee on the Date of Origin of the Society.

On motion, by a unanimous vote, the Report was accepted; the year 1727 was declared to be the date of the foundation of the Society, in accordance with the finding of the Committee; and the Committee was discharged, with the thanks of the Society for its exhaustive report.

Extracted from the Minutes.

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